NPA rebels burn soldier alive in Samar ambush

STORY IN ACROSS, PAGE A13

PUP to modify test for blind scholars

By Donna S. Cueto and Rocky Nazareno

THERE'S light at the end of the proverbial tunnel—at least for the seven blind scholars of President Macapagal-Arroyo who wanted to study at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines but were refused entry.

PUP officials yesterday said the

PUP/A15

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FROM/A15

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Sikatuna group blamed

Ex-DFA chief Romulo behind GMA-Guingona row, says solon

PRESIDENTIAL adviser Roberto Romulo: Alleged leader of a Makati-based group with a "hidden agenda."

VICE President Teofisto Guingona Jr.: "Certain forces" want him out of the DFA.

FILE PHOTOS

By Juliet L. Javellana, Carlito Pablo and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE SO-CALLED "Sikatuna group" at the Department of Foreign Affairs is to blame for the conflict between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

"Obviously, they are feeding the President wrong stories (about Guingona), and it appears that the President is lending an ear to this private group that has a hidden agenda," the Iloilo congressman said of the group led by Roberto Romulo, a former foreign secretary during the Ramos administration.

Romulo resigned from the Ramos Cabinet at the height of the Flor Contemplacion controversy in 1995.

But in Tagum City, Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco said the President and the Vice President had reached a common ground to resolve the rift.

"The 2004 election is still a long way off," Capco told reporters in Filipino.

At 9 last night, Ms Macapagal and Guingona met at the presidential suite of the Marco Polo Hotel in Davao City in what acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable described as a "heart-to-heart talk."

"All issues were resolved," Afable told reporters. He said the 45-minute encounter was "cordial" and was meant to forge a "win-win solution" to the issues."

He, however, refused to divulge details.

Gonzalez said there were indications that Romulo's "Sikatuna group"—named after his office in Makati City where some DFA officials and local

SIKATUNA/A15

Rift threatening Lakas unity, members warn

By Juliet L. Javellana and Carlito Pablo

THE RIFT between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Teofisto Guingona could tear apart the Lakas-NUCD, according to members of the ruling party.

"Definitely, it has a way of demoralizing the ranks of the Lakas party, especially now that Kampi is being reactivated," Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo II said yesterday in reference to Ms Macapagal's original party, the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino, which has for its president her longtime personal publicist Dante Ang.

Gunigundo added: "Just what is the plan for 2004?"

Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez urged Ms Macapagal and Guingona—Lakas chair and president, respectively—to settle their personal and official differences to avert a full-blown crisis.

"I suggest that as the leading lights of the party, they sit down and settle their differences," he said. "I think it is not too late for the President to make a conciliatory gesture. We cannot afford to have these leaks turn into a flood."

Gonzalez also said Speaker Jose de Venecia, Lakas co-chair and broker of the Guingona resignation, to cut short his trip to Russia.

"I think Speaker Joe should stop his peregrination and come home to make the necessary carpentry to repair the leaks," Gonzalez said.

But he said that should a realignment of forces occur, he expected Lakas rank and file to "still rally behind the President, unless the President makes a move to abandon the party."

Guingona himself issued a statement saying that Lakas "is not in disarray," and that it "stands behind the unity of

RIFT/A15

Manila cops in bribe try in hot water

By Jerome Aning and Philip Tubeza *in Manila*
Jovelyn Reyes and Vincent Cabreza *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

AN ANGRY Manila Mayor Lito Atienza on Monday ordered the investigation of a city police official for allegedly trying to bribe Baguio City policemen in return for the release of three drug suspects.

"*Nakita nyo na, hanggang sa* Baguio *gumagawa ng kawalanghiyaan* (You see, these people even went to Baguio to commit misdeeds)," Atienza said.

"These policemen would not have dared pull a stunt like this if they were directly under local government control and supervision because they know that they would not get away with it," he added.

Atienza also used the controversy as an opportunity to point out "how discipline in the ranks of the country's police force has deteriorated."

He renewed his appeal to return control and supervision over the police to the local governments.

On Sunday, Insp. Luis Chico of the Western Police District (WPD) went to the office of Senior Insp. Marcos Eblahan Jr., chief of the 14th Regional Narcotics Group office in Baguio, to intercede for three suspected drug pushers.

Chico and several companions allegedly offered Eblahan and his men P200,000 for the release of Marcelo de Juaiting and two other suspects.

De Juaiting, 40, a businessman from Bulacan, was arrested on Saturday afternoon during a buy-bust operation in a house on Naguilian Road in Baguio.

Also arrested in that operation were De Juaiting's driver Poncelito Cruz, 40,

MANILA/A5

RP, US agree on 'sustained' anti-terror program

By Martin Marfil, *in Manila*
and Ayan C. Mellejor, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

THE PHILIPPINES and the United States are undertaking a "sustained" program of security cooperation against terrorism after the thousand-strong US military contingent taking part in Balikatan 02-1 pulls out at the end of the month.

Members of the bilateral Mutual Defense Board issued a statement saying it had discussed last week "the transition from Balikatan 02-1 into a sustained program of security cooperation and counter-terrorism training and assistance."

In Tagum City, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced what amounts to the first phase of the longer-term program: a new Balikatan exercise, involving a smaller number of American troops, dispersed throughout the main island groups.

In her speech before farmers at the RDR Gym in Barangay Mankilam, the President said Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Roy Cimatu would "make a presentation of the new Balikatan which will follow after the end of Balikatan on July 31, so that we will hear what the people of Region 11 (Southern Mindanao) say about working with American forces, training our people here in Mindanao and in the Philippines," she said.

She said the sustained anti-terrorism effort was due to continued calls by the public to have

RP/A15

PRESIDENT Macapagal is warmly welcomed by officials and residents in Tagum City during the celebration of the 35th founding anniversary of the province of Davao del Norte.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Too many 'A-yers' in PNP, not enough books

FORENSIC FAILURES

An I-TEAM Report

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo and Luige del Puerto

(Second of Two Parts)

WHEN forensic expertise is brought to bear on a case, the results can be dramatic.

Dr. Maximo Reyes, head of the National Bureau of Investigation's medico-legal division, recalls one rape case in particular. The crime had taken place at the Quezon Memorial Circle, but the suspects said it could not have happened in the popular park at all.

The NBI conducted another test, Reyes recalls. "We found a piece of grass in the vaginal canal and we

TOO MANY/A16

School for probers to rise

By Luige A. del Puerto

EARLY this year, a delegation from the Philippine National Police (PNP) visited the United States to meet with representatives of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other US law enforcement agencies. The team's agenda: putting up the first school for investigators in the Philippines.

The team also visited five police academies in 10 days.

Their mission underscores the difficulty the country's policemen face when it comes to scientific and systematic investigation, according to Director Lucas Managuelod, chief of the PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM).

SCHOOL/A16

Second FRONT PAGE

DAPAT MAIMBESTIGAHAN!

ERAP PLUNDER TRIAL

Ombudsman sets probe of Bong Pineda

By Michael Lim Ubac

OMBUDSMAN Aniano Desierto yesterday ordered a preliminary investigation to establish the culpability of alleged jueteng lords Bong Pineda and his brother Romy, vis-a-vis the plunder case filed against deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Desierto said the preliminary investigation would ascertain if the Pineda brothers could be impleaded in the case being heard by the Sandiganbayan Special Division.

Aside from the Pinedas, the Ombudsman will also investigate Anton Prieto, Estrada's Presidential Assistant for Bicol Affairs; Baby Ortaliza, self-confessed "errand girl" of Estrada and juetengate whistleblower Luis "Chavit" Singson; and Jose Victor Uy, a.k.a. Eleuterio Tan.

The preliminary investigation will be conducted by the Ombudsman Evaluation and Preliminary Investigation Bureau (EPIB) headed by lawyer Jose T. de Jesus Jr.

Desierto said that the EPIB panel would give the respondents 10 days to answer the charges. "After 30 days, the case will be deemed submitted for resolution," he said.

The Ombudsman explained that the prosecution panel decided to investigate the liabilities of the Pinedas, Prieto, Ortaliza and Uy after their names cropped up in prosecution witnesses' testimonies.

Carmencita Itchon, who testified on June 24, and Emma Lim, who took the stand yesterday, both claimed that the Pinedas and Prieto had regularly delivered jueteng collections to Chavit, who, in turn, allegedly gave them to Estrada.

Lim testified that she twice picked up jueteng money from the house of Bong Pineda in Northeast Greenhills, San Juan.

"The incidents occurred in February and April 2000," said Desierto, quoting Lim. "The Pinedas twice gave her P5 million." He added, "The Pinedas allegedly delivered money several times to Estrada. But Lim was privy to only those two instances."

During Estrada's aborted impeachment trial, Lim also claimed she had been asked to pick up jueteng money from the office of Estrada's son, Jinggoy, in San Juan.

Desierto said that Jinggoy, then mayor of San Juan, gave Lim P1 million every time she went to his office. "The jueteng collection went into a jueteng pool being supervised by Chavit," said Desierto.

For his part, Prieto delivered to Estrada jueteng money totaling P12 million in checks, from January 1999 to 2000, according to the Ombudsman.

"The checks were issued to Lim, who deposited them to Chavit's account with Metrobank," said Desierto.

He said Prieto had drawn the checks from his own account with the Philippine National Bank branch in Naga City.

The prosecution panel had tried to automatically implead Ortaliza and Uy in the plunder case by asking the court to name them as the John and Jane Does in the charge sheet.

This was rejected by the court, on the ground that the two were not afforded the right to defense during preliminary investigation last year.

Ortaliza incriminated herself, Desierto said, by admitting that she did banking errands for Estrada and Singson.

Desierto disclosed that Ortaliza had deposited more than P60 million to an alleged Estrada account with the Security Bank, and more than P800 million to the Jose Velarde account.

Napolcom to decide on appeal of 7 top cops today

THE NATIONAL Police Commission (Napolcom) is set to release today or early Wednesday its decision on the motion for reconsideration filed by the seven police officers it relieved from their posts, according to Interior Secretary Joey Lina.

Lina, chair of the seven-member Napolcom, said Napolcom commissioners would decide on the motion last night.

"Before 12 midnight we will finish the decision," he said at a press conference yesterday.

The motions for reconsideration asked for a lifting of the relief order that Napolcom issued on Wednesday for the police officers' failure to eradicate jueteng and other forms of illegal gambling.

The motions were filed by Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay, Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, Directors Avelino Razon and Domingo A. Reyes, Senior Superintendents Leonilo de la Cruz and Jose Antonio S. Salvacion, and Chief Supt. Nicolas D. Pasinos Jr.

"We don't want to create an atmosphere of uncertainty," Lina said.

In Davao City, Benjamin Abalos Sr., chair of the Commission on Elections, said his office would have the last say on the relief order.

"The seven PNP officials will stay put and there is no movement as of this time," Abalos said.

But Abalos said he could not yet schedule the Comelec deliberations on the relief order as he was still waiting for the detailed explanation from Lina.

Abalos had said that Lina could be criminally charged for violating the election ban on the hiring and firing of government personnel if he insisted on implementing the order without the Comelec's approval. ***Reports from Leila Salaverria in Manila and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Solon lauds gov't for OIC recognition of ARRM

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE ORGANIZATION of the Islamic Conference's decision to recognize the new government in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao showed that it was accepting the political structure of the Bangsa Moro people in Mindanao, according to Sen. Rodolfo Biazon.

"This is a great shift from the OIC's position of recognizing only Nur Misuari or the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front) as the sole representative of the Bangsa Moro people," he said.

Biazon, a former Armed Forces chief of staff, said the OIC recognition of the ARMM would remove the basis of the rebellion being waged by Muslim rebel groups.

He congratulated the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo for achieving the diplomatic feat, which three former presidents—Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada—did not accomplish.

With the recognition, Biazon expects the OIC to extend assistance to Mindanao in the form of peace initiatives, economic development efforts and investments.

"This could be considered a flicker of light at the end of the tunnel in the pursuit of the solutions to the problems of Mindanao," he said.

For his part, Sen. Gregorio Honasan, chair of the Senate peace committee, said the committee would invite the special team of the OIC to an inquiry to assess the implementation of the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF.

Honasan said the committee wanted to obtain inputs from the OIC special team, which is scheduled to visit the country.

"It is inherent upon Congress to assess how the international community, particularly among the Muslim people, look at how far and how faithful the two parties fulfilled their commitments under the 1996 peace pact," he said.

He said that in the course of its review, the committee had seen discrepancies in the implementation of the peace pact.

The OIC team's observations will be assessed in connection with two interim agreements the Philippine government concluded with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Libya and Malaysia last May.

Honasan said the committee was also interested in knowing the progress of development projects in Mindanao and the integration of former MNLF rebels into the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

Honasan said former MNLF chair Nur Misuari must be given a chance to refute government accusations that he pocketed funds and failed to institute genuine reforms while he was the ARMM governor.

Misuari's successor, ARMM Gov. Parouk Hussin, had claimed in his inaugural speech that he inherited from his predecessor as of last year less than P500,000 in cash and accounts payable of P22 million.

In his 2002 accomplishment report, Misuari claimed that the national government had only given him "minimal support" to implement his proposed programs and projects.

"Unless discrepancies like this are resolved to the satisfaction of the OIC special team, our longstanding bid for an observer status before the Islamic world to protect the interests of our Muslim brothers will always be sidelined," Honasan said.

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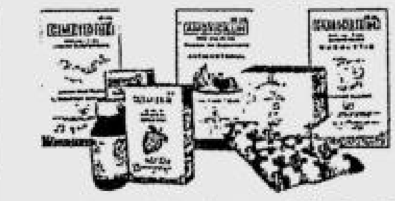

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LA group defends terror suspects

A LOS Angeles-based immigrants group has come to the defense of Filipinos and other foreigners in the United States who are reportedly set to be deported due to suspected links to the al-Qaida terrorist network.

Arturo Garcia, head of the Coalition to Defend Immigrant Rights (CDIR), claimed that the methods of identifying the people to be deported were purely based on racial grounds. Sixty-three Filipino Americans have been arrested and deported back to the Philippines since the plan was implemented. One of the victims, William Manalastas, is now languishing in a jail in Kentucky. "We demand that Manalastas be freed and given his day in Court. He should not be detained and treated as a suspected terrorist," Garcia said in a statement.

Gov't troops, gunships pound Abus with rockets, artillery fire

GOVERNMENT troops, backed by helicopter gunships, pounded Muslim extremist guerrillas with artillery and rocket fire yesterday in the latest clash in a US-backed military offensive, officials said.

At least one soldier was wounded and an unspecified number of Abu Sayyaf guerrillas were killed or injured in the mountainous hinterlands of Patikul town on Jolo island, the military said.

The firefight erupted around 8:25 a.m. when soldiers of the 14th Infantry Battalion encountered a 30-strong group led by Radulan Sahiron in Barangay Tanum, Patikul, said retired Gen. Melchor Rosales. He withheld the identity of the wounded soldier.

"The enemy is believed to have suffered a number of casualties," Rosales said.

The guerrillas were dragging away their wounded or dead, making it hard to estimate their casualties, military spokesman Lt. Col. Danilo Servando said.

Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, who heads the Southern Command, said Army scout rangers fought the same guerrillas last Thursday, when one army officer was killed and seven soldiers were wounded.

President Macapagal said the military has captured four guerrilla camps in Patikul since Thursday. She described the current offensive as a major attempt to wipe out remnants of the al Qaida-linked group on Jolo island.

The guerrillas, a combined group of Abu Sayyaf led by chieftain Khadaffy Janjalani and Radullan Sahiron, had been tracked by US surveillance aircraft, Carolina said last week.

Sahiron, a prominent one-armed rebel, is the subject of a P5-million reward offer by the Philippine government for his capture. Janjalani is among five Abu Sayyaf leaders wanted by the United States, which is offering up to $5 million for information leading to their capture.

One of the five leaders, Abu Sabaya, is believed to have been killed in a sea clash with government forces last month. His body and those of two other rebels reportedly slain in the clash have not been found.

Janjalani helped lead a raid on Dos Palmas island resort in Palawan, where the guerrillas abducted 20 people in May 2001, including three Americans. That raid set off a kidnapping spree that victimized a total of 102 people, 18 of whom were beheaded or hacked to death. ***Reports by AP and Martin P. Marfil***

MILF sacks Jullabi as its spokesperson

COTABATO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front has sacked Uztadz Shariff Moshin Jullabi as its spokesperson for Western Mindanao.

"He was directed to keep his mouth shut and stop talking before the media for and in behalf of the MILF," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu told the INQUIRER.

Despite the MILF Central Committee's directive for Jullabi to stop talking, the self-proclaimed MILF spokesperson for Western Mindanao on Sunday issued a statement that Army Scout Ranger Lt. Jessie James Apura was shot by fellow government soldiers in a battle with Abu Sayyaf Group in Sulu last week.

Kabalu said the MILF has no business speaking for and in behalf of the Abu Sayyaf.

"That is counter productive since the MILF has no links, in anyway, with the Abu Sayyaf," Kabalu said referring to Jullabi's latest pronouncement.

"He is just a plain MILF member, he has no business speaking for the MILF, especially on matters affecting the govern-ment's campaign against the Abu Sayyaf and matters pertaining to the GRP-MILF peace process," Kabalu said.

He added that only he and MILF political Affairs chief Ghazali Jaafar were authorized to speak for the front.

Retired Maj. Gen. Melchor Rosales also disputed Jullabi's allegations.

"I have very serious reasons to doubt the statement of (MILF Official) Jullabi. First of all, he has been admonished by his own group about several statements that he had made in the past," Rosales said.

"Secondly, how could he talk about the skirmish when he was not even there (vis-a-vis) the statement of the troops," he added. ***Reports by Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Martin Marfil***

RP, Malaysia to hold joint military training

THE PHILIPPINES and Malaysia are to begin this week small-scale joint military training exercises in the northern Philippines, a Filipino army spokesman said Monday.

The six-day exercises, to begin on Wednesday, will involve less than 100 Filipino troops and will mostly involve classroom training, Lt. Col. Michael Manquiquis said.

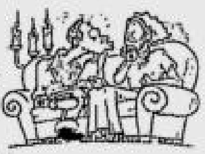
"This is more of a classroom training, doctrine and most of the time, Philippine and Malaysian troops would work side-by-side on the tables," Manquiquis said.

He did not say how many Malaysian soldiers would take part.

Military sources however said some 75 Malaysian army troops will participate in the annual training, which began in 1998.

Malaysia last year hosted the training exercises in Sabah, near the Philippines' southern sea border.

Both countries are also involved in joint patrol exercises and, along with Indonesia, are bound by a trilateral agreement to combat regional terrorism. ***AFP***



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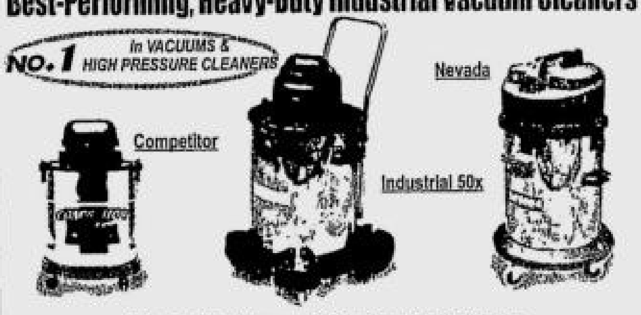

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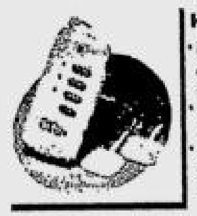

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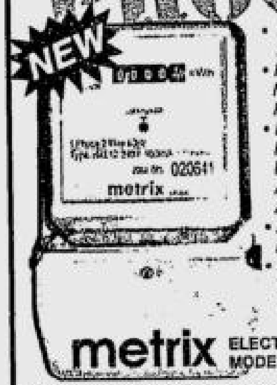

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'I didn't know I won, all the judges spoke in Russian'

IT took a few seconds before Kristine Reyes Alzar realized she had become the latest Filipina to win a world beauty title.

"All the judges spoke in Russian," she said. "The other candidates started prodding me to walk to the center of the stage, all by myself. And then I knew."

The 21-year-old, five-foot-seven Batangueña was proclaimed Miss Tourism International Ukraine, Black Sea at the end of a pageant that highlighted Ukraine's Independence Day celebrations over the weekend.

Wearing a crown studded with Swarovski crystals, she walked down the ramp at the Arts and Culture Exhibition Center in the Ukranian port city of Odessa

She had bested 16 candidates, taking over the title from last year's winner, Miss Peru. First runner-up was Nataliya Lovtsevich of Belarus, and second runner-up was Alina Cheveleva of Ukraine-East. The other finalists were from Armenia, Larvia, India, Greece, and Ukraine-South.

"This means so much to me," was all the Filipina beauty could say in acceptance.

Alzar, who was also named "Best in National Costume," won US$5,000 in cash from the pageant organizers—the Ukraine Ministry of Tourism and Miss Ukraine National Committees in Odessa and Kiev.

A hotel and restaurant management graduate and the daughter of a retired banker in Lipa City, Alzar is the reigning Bb. Pilipinas International. She credited last weekend's victory to a pre-pageant training in Bogota, Colombia, and her "backstage experience" at the recent Miss Universe in Puerto Rico, which she attended as observer.

She will compete in the Miss International tilt in Hawaii this October.

"I know that's a bigger competition," she said, "but I am more than ready for it. I thank the Bb. Pilipinas Charities for its confidence and support."

The brand-new titlist came home last Sunday, and will meet Philippine media at noon today in Araneta Center's Oasis (formerly Gazebo).

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KRISTINE Reyes Alzar, the reigning Bb. Pilipinas International, bested 16 candidates for the title Miss Tourism International Ukraine, Black Sea.

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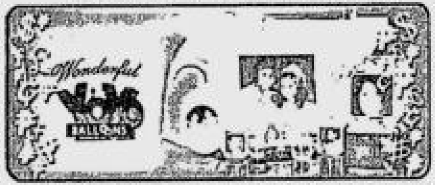

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RP is No. 4 on Red Cross list of the world's disaster capitals

By Armand N. Nocum

DISASTER capitals of the world include the Philippines in slot no. 4.

A World Disasters Report prepared by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies showed that close to six million Filipinos, or 7.83 percent of the population, were killed or harmed in calamities over a period of nine years.

China topped the list, with 97,783,301 victims. India was next with 46,060,125; and Iran, 6,416,570. After the Philippines came Ethiopia, 3,334,266; and Pakistan, 2,732,032.

In a program yesterday marking July as National Disaster Month, local Red Cross officials said that these other countries had been hit by major floods and famines, and intermittent wars from 1992 to 2001.

On the other hand, they said many of the 5,809,986 Filipinos reported killed in, or directly affected by, disasters were victims of "man-made calamities."

Dante Liban, Philippine National Red Cross governor, said the numbers proved that the Philippines was a "natural laboratory" for floods, typhoons, monsoon rains, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and landslides. But he said the mishaps cited in the report also included shipping disasters, the Ozone and Manor Hotel fires, and the Payatas landslide.

In other words, he said, many disasters were the result of government negligence.

Local Red Cross figures showed that disasters killed 31,835 people and directly affected a total of 94,369,462 in a span of 20 years, Liban said. The figures show that many Filipinos were apparently victims of one or more disasters.

Raymundo Punongbayan, head of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, disputed the World Disasters Report, saying his own records reflected a much lower casualty count from 1992 to 2001.

"Their numbers look erroneous," he said in a news briefing. In fact, he pointed out, the Philippine situation is much better than in other parts of the world.

"One earthquake alone in China killed 250,000 people," he said. "In Colombia, lahar killed 25,000. But here, the figure is much lower."

He attributed this to the alertness and preparedness of defense and Red Cross officials in responding to calamities.

The global report also showed that from 1992 to 2001, natural disasters killed 535,416 people worldwide; while 86,947 were killed in industrial, transport and other "technological disasters."

Ex-solgen accuses PCGG official of sabotaging 4 cases vs Marcoses

By Donna S. Cueto

THE RESEARCH director of the Presidential Commission on Good Government in charge of vital evidence and documents on the Marcos ill-gotten wealth for more than a decade, has been accused of sabotaging four big criminal cases involving former first lady Imelda Marcos and several Swiss foundations used as dummy by the Marcoses to hide their wealth.

Former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez is making this accusation against Danilo Daniel, former finance and administration chief of the PCGG, who has insisted on the withdrawal of criminal cases 22867 to 22870 since 1995.

Chavez got hold of two internal memoranda from Daniel. One dated Sept. 20, 1995, which was addressed to then Assistant Solicitor General Cesario del Rosario, in which Daniel recommended the withdrawal of cases 22867, 22868, and 22670, and the amendment of criminal case 22869.

While he insisted on the withdrawal of the cases filed in 1991, the Office of the Ombudsman, upon review of the cases, disagreed with him and noted that there were "no cogent reasons to reverse the earlier finding of probable cause" by the Department of Justice. This finding by the Ombudsman, particularly by its legal counsel, Paul Elmer Clemente, was dated July 15, 1999.

Daniel apparently got the Office of the Special Prosecutor in his favor. The OSP had recommended to the Ombudsman the dismissal of the cases. The Ombudsman turned down the recommendation.

But Daniel would not let it rest. Again, on Nov. 20, 2001, he wrote the PCGG insisting on the withdrawal of the cases. He claimed that there was insufficient evidence to back it up.

Both Chavez and the Ombudsman said that there was more than sufficient evidence to pin Imelda Marcos in the four cases, contrary to what Daniel was saying.

Daniel even wrote PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza that he already had a copy of the "motion to quash information" or the charge sheet filed by the counsel of the Marcoses. He said he had been furnished this motion by the prosecutor.

Chavez noted that Daniel had an unusually keen interest in these big criminal cases, which he himself helped prepare in 1991.

Daniel had been accused of being the mole of the Swiss bankers. Under his watch as research director, several documents were said to have gone missing for some mysterious reason.

But nothing had been proven despite the allegations.

Chavez now believes that he has now the goods against Daniel.

"These documents are not just the smoking gun. They are the arsenal of documentary evidence that will prove once again that Danilo Daniel is not only the mole of the Swiss bankers, Swiss prosecutors and our Swiss lawyers, but sadly also the mole of the Marcoses," the former Solicitor General said. "I was right all along."

Daniel was part of Chavez's task force when he was still the solicitor general preparing the forfeiture petition and the main criminal cases against the Marcoses.

"He (Daniel) was one of 12 people I trusted in examining and studying the documents and in building up criminal cases against the Marcoses. He knows that before we filed the (criminal) information against Imelda Marcos concerning these foundations that we had sufficient, adequate documentary basis that would establish not only probable cause but guilt beyond reasonable doubt of Mrs. Marcos," Chavez said.

Daniel was part of the Task Force led by Chavez that prepared the forfeiture case against Mrs. Marcos, and which filed the main criminal cases regarding the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses.

Typhoon skirts Luzon

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

TYPHOON "Florita" intensifies but moves away.

Tropical depression Florita intensified into a typhoon yesterday morning but has skirted Luzon and was moving toward the Taiwan-Okinawa area.

According to the latest weather bulletin issued by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration at 4 p.m., the eye of Florita was located 1,050 km east northeast of Legazpi City at 2 p.m.

It had a maximum sustained winds of 120 kph near the center and gustiness of up to 150 kph. It was expected to move northeast at 15 kph in the general direction of Taiwan and Okinawa, Japan.

The weather bureau said Florita was said to be 910 km northeast of Legazpi City or 960 km east northeast of Casiguran, Aurora this morning. The typhoon is expected to be at 770 km east northeast of Casiguran, Aurora or 710 km east southeast of Basco, Batanes by Wednesday morning.

NEWSBRIEFS

GMA to visit Camp Abubakar today

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will visit today Camp Abubakar, the former main headquarters of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front that fell to government hands two years ago. This will be the first visit for Ms Macapagal since she assumed the presidency in January 2001. Camp Abubakar in Maguindanao was among the MILF camps that were seized by government forces during the all-out war campaign waged by the Estrada administration against the Moro insurgents. The President had earlier planned to go to Camp Abubakar last May. *Carlito Pablo*

Rebs raid militia outpost, seize 16 rifles

ZAMBOANGA CITY—About 40 communist guerrillas seized at least 16 assault rifles during a raid on a government militia outpost in Misamis Occidental, police said yesterday. One militiaman was missing and may have been taken by the New People's Army rebels who raided the outpost near the town of Sapang Dalaga on Sunday, police said. Troops and police were pursuing the guerrillas, who took 13 M-14 rifles, two M-16s, a Garand rifle and a hand-held radio set during the brief attack in the poor, coconut-producing province. The village-based militia helps the military protect civilians from attacks by insurgents. *AP*

NBI nabs 7th suspect in Quintos slays

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents arrested one of the 14 suspects involved in the 1997 Quintos twin killings in Occidental Mindoro. Security guard Orlando Pascua Estanes Sr. became the seventh suspect to fall to the hands of authorities after he allegedly boasted about his participation in the killing. Estanes, 41, alias Edong, of Metrocor South Gate, Almanza, Las Piñas, was arrested in his home over the weekend, said NBI acting Director Fermin N. Nasol during a press conference yesterday. Estanes allegedly acted as a lookout in the killing of brothers Michael and Paul Quintos in Mamburao, Occidental Mindoro, on Dec. 13, 1997. The suspect admitted to the crime, saying that he was "lured" into it by the other suspects, who were allegedly identified with Quintos' political rival, Jose T. Villarosa. Estanes is included in the warrant of arrest issued by Branch 81 Judge Teresa Yadao of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court against the Quintos twin-slay. Nasol presented the suspect to the media yesterday. *Philip Tubeza*

Here come 'super peanuts'

AFTER the Super Mangoes, now come the Super Peanuts. The Department of Agrarian Reform is pushing for the planting of high-yielding peanuts to increase the profitability of agrarian reform communities (ARCs) in place of the traditional crop palay, following its successful test in a small farmland in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija. Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza said that peanut is a viable alternative for agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs) especially in time for the expected arrival of the El Niño phenomenon in the last quarter of this year because it is easier to plant and less dependent on water. "Super peanut commands higher price, at least twice the price of rice. Super peanut costs between P40 and P50 a kilo," Braganza noted. He added that the demand for peanut is quite high today, as food processors prefer locally produced peanut due to its freshness from the farm. However, the current local production of peanuts is not enough to meet the demand of local processors. *Gerald G. Lacuarta*

Owwa chief dares Pat

OVERSEAS Workers Welfare Administration chief Wilhelm Soriano dared his superiors in the Department of Labor and Employment to make good its threat to stop the disbursements to the Owwa and paralyze its operations. Soriano expressed confidence that the Department of Budget and Management, as well as the Commission on Audit, would give the Owwa the go signal to disburse funds according to its previous year's budget. He said Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas had already tried to stop disbursements of the Owwa in January for not complying with the budgetary requirement, but the DBM and COA told the welfare agency that there were laws authorizing it to operate despite a memorandum from higher authority. Sto. Tomas had threatened to stop the release of funds of Owwa if it continues to refuse to submit a budget that does not exceed the P562-million ceiling. *Blanche S. Rivera*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, July 2, 2002
13th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Am 3:1-8; 4:11-12**
Gospel: **Mt 8:23-27**

Jesus got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Without warning a fierce storm hit the lake, with waves sweeping the boat. But Jesus was asleep.

They woke him and cried, "Lord save us! We are lost!" But Jesus answered, "Why are you so afraid, you of little faith?" Then he stood up and ordered the wind and sea; and it became completely calm.

The people were astonished. They said, "What kind of man is he? Even the winds and the sea obey him."

Commentary

"The Perfect Storm," the movie about the lost fishing boat Andrea Gail, showed us the courage of brave men; the "storm in the lake of Nazareth" of the gospel put the faith of the disciples to test. We could name it "The Perfect Storm" if it makes us move from fear to faith. "Why are you so afraid, you of little faith?" (Mt 8:26) Jesus tells his disciples. Fear and faith bring us by different paths. Fear forces us to turn to ourselves and paralyzes us, or urges us to escape. Faith, however, enables us to take risks, to face the challenges of life. Fear always finds reasons not to move. Faith keeps us alive and impels us into action. The Lord is with us, in the same boat (name it); why are we so afraid?

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Forum-shopping—Forum-shopping is an act of a party against whom an adverse judgment or order has been rendered in one forum, of seeking and possibly getting a favorable opinion in another forum, other than by appeal or special civil action for *certiorari*. It may also be the institution of two or more actions or proceedings grounded on the same cause on the opposition that one or the other court would make a favorable disposition. For it to exist, there should be (a) identity of parties, or at least such parties as would represent the same interest in both actions; (b) identity of rights asserted and relief prayed for, the relief being founded on the same facts; and (c) identity of the two preceding particulars such that any judgment rendered in the other action will, regardless of which party is successful, amount to *res judicata* in the action under consideration. Thus, there is no forum-shopping where, for instance, the special civil action for *certiorari* and the appeal brought by a party do not involve the same issue. [Citations omitted.] [*En Banc*, Chief Justice Davide, Jr., GSIS v. Bengson Commercial Buildings, Inc., G.R. No. 137448, GSIS v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 141454, January 31, 2002]

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Manila cops in hot water

From page A1

and Rafael Lumba, 38, the owner of the house.

The Baguio policemen turned down Chico's offer. But after he left, 12 men claiming to be policemen assigned to the National Capital Regional Police Office arrived and also tried to intercede for the suspects.

Atienza said Chico and the other policemen involved in the bribery attempt deserve to be dismissed if found guilty.

An embarrassment

"These policemen are an embarrassment and they should not stay any minute longer in the service," he said.

Imelda Guillermo, wife of De Juaiting and whom Narcgroup officials claimed was with Chico when the bribe offer was made, said she was "used" by her husband's friends. She denied any involvement in the bribe try.

"All I did was to follow instructions, as all I was interested in was to see my husband," said Guillermo in a sworn affidavit.

Guillermo was handcuffed and crying when she was presented to Baguio Assistant Prosecutor Elmer Sagsago for inquest investigation on Monday.

She had filed a motion for an investigation of her case, stressing that she had no direct knowledge that a bribery attempt took place.

But Guillermo admitted in her sworn affidavit that several friends of her husband accompanied her when she went to the Narcgroup office on Sunday morning.

She was referring to the 12 policemen supposedly assigned to the WPD and NCRPO drug enforcement unit, who were present when the bribery offer took place.

Eblahan said it was Chico who offered his team a shopping bag full of cash, in exchange for De Juaiting's release to their custody.

Chico charged

Only Chico and Guillermo, however, were charged on Monday with the bribery try. Narcgroup officers failed to arrest Chico whom they said suddenly disappeared after the alleged bribe try.

Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos, Western Police District director, wondered why the Baguio policemen did not arrest Chico. He said he had ordered Chico disarmed and investigated.

Chico, who reported for work on Monday, admitted going to Baguio on Sunday "to help a friend." He denied having bribed anybody.

"I asked them 'Why is he not in your custody?' Right then and there Chico should have been arrested," Pasinos said.

"There is a technicality (for bribery). You immediately put under arrest (the briber) while the crime is being committed," he said.

He said he could not order Chico's arrest since he (Pasinos) did not have "direct knowledge" of the case. But Pasinos said the WPD general assignments section would investigate Chico to find out if he has any "administrative liability."

"Chico has nothing to do with drugs. Only the DEU (drug enforcement unit), and not just anybody, can operate (against illegal drugs)," Pasinos said. "This is to avoid complaints (of frame-up) and other allegations."

Pasinos said Chico's trip to Baguio was not an official mission.

Individual act

"The WPD has nothing to do with it. This is his own individual act," he said.

Chico reportedly told his superiors that he did not commit any wrongdoing.

"He said he was called by a friend who needed help and so he went there," said Chief Insp. Ferdinand Quirante, chief of the WPD Civil Disturbance Management Group.

Chico heads a platoon of anti-riot policemen assigned to secure the US Embassy in Manila.

"Sir, *tumulong lang ho ako* (Sir, I just helped)," Quirante quoted Chico as saying.

"He just accompanied his friend. He had no other purpose. He said he had no money," Quirante added.

"*Binaligtad yung istorya nung umalis siya* (They spun a new story when Chico left Baguio)," he said.

Chico, according to reports, was conferring with his lawyer.

Chief Insp. Marcelino Pedrozo, WPD general assignments section chief, said he was giving Chico until today to show up.

Pasinos said he also ordered an investigation of the other policemen who were allegedly with Chico.

Wife's version

Guillermo said she did not know why her husband was arrested.

"I never offered money to the arresting officers in exchange for the release of my husband as I do not even know why my husband was arrested . . . I did not know that my companions tried to offer money to the police officers who arrested my husband," Guillermo told Sagsago.

"(At) about 8 p.m. (June 28), my husband . . . called me up to bring to Baguio City a jacket and some clothes . . . he also told me to get ready as soon as possible as his friends, who are coming to Baguio City, (were) to pick me up."

She said De Juaiting's friends, whom she did not name, fetched her from their house in Bulacan an hour after the call, and went straight to Baguio.

Upon arriving there, she said she was told to head for the Narcgroup office.

"I was instructed by my companions to just go inside the (Narcgroup) office and (I was told) to tell (the Narcgroup officials) they (De Juaiting's friends) will be talking to them," she said.

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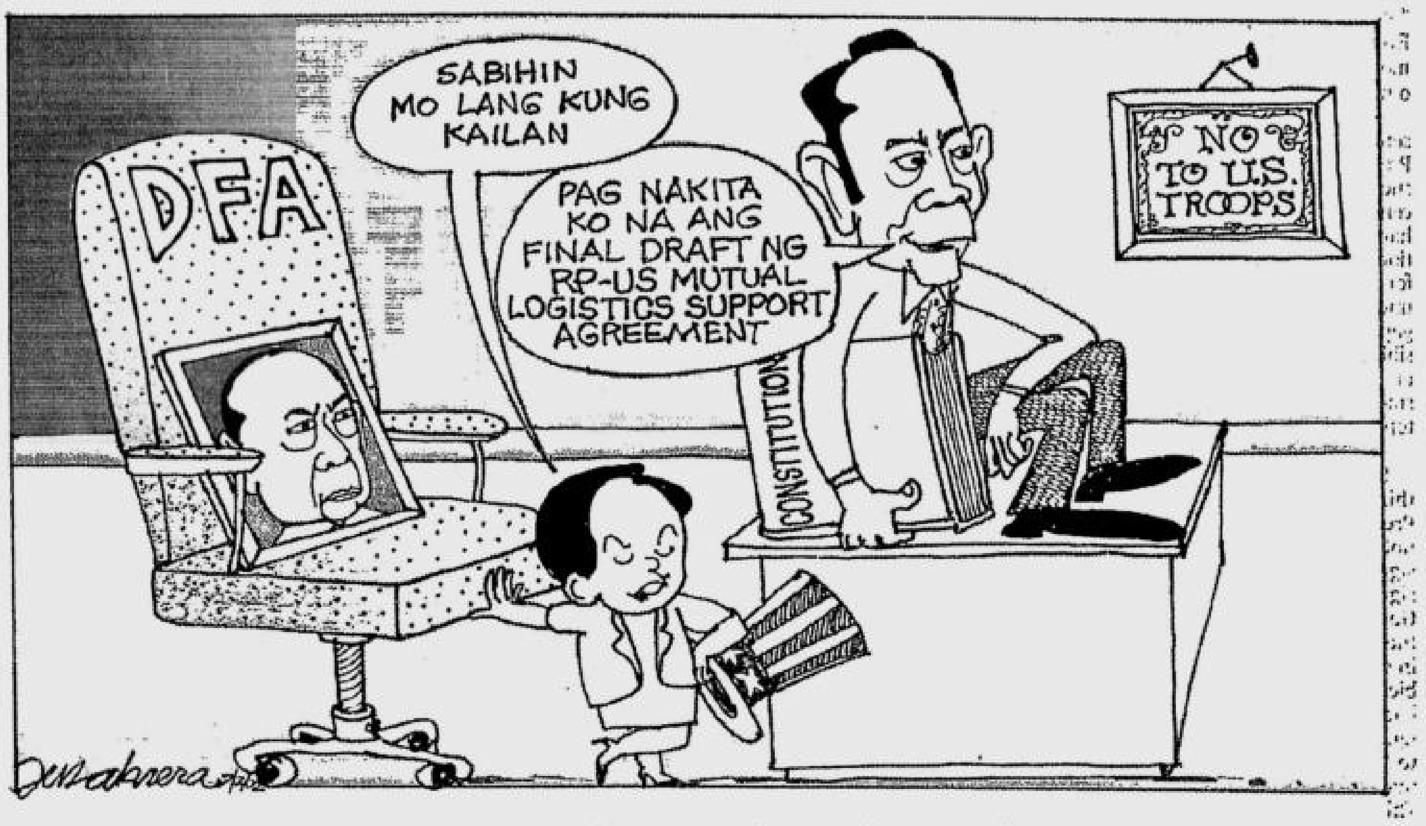
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Gentler Malaysia

EDITORIAL

HOW Malaysia will manage the transition after 21 years of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is worth watching for Filipinos used to rocky transitions of their own. If the shock that greeted Mahathir's sudden offer to resign during the annual conference of the United Malays National Organization (Umno) party—that, and his withdrawal of the announcement after party leaders had pleaded him—were to be a indication, the transition seems headed for a lot of surprises. To Filipinos used to political tremors, that wouldn't anymore be surprising.

What the Malaysian flip-flop shows is that the transition will be determined by the personality of Mahathir, a personality that is a combination of the charismatic, the fanciful, the quixotic, the iron fist, and alas, the mercurial. For somebody who has shown deliberateness and determination in his political moves, Mahathir's emotional offer to resign seems to negate the qualities that have allowed him to stay in power for so long.

What the offer has spawned is speculation about the transition. According to Umno leaders, Mahathir will hand over power to his deputy, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, late next year. Although the length of time is calculated in such a way that Badawi grows into the premiereship, it is also quite protracted, enough for some party jockeying and internal struggle to take place.

Will the time also be enough for the opposition to strengthen itself and contest Umno's dominance? Perhaps. At present, the opposition coalition has a number of fundamentalist Islamic parties that have lost ground as a result of 9/11. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks against the United States, Mahathir has jailed a number of suspected extremists and polished his international image as a moderate Muslim leader by visits to the United States and the Vatican.

It would have been good timing if Mahathir had indeed stuck to his resignation. Now is as good a time as any for him to step down after 21 years of steering Malaysia to becoming one of the continent's more affluent nations. Under his helm, Malaysia was able to ride out the 1997 currency crisis and regain its footing. Taking over the finance portfolio, he tried to steady Malaysia in the sea of currency turmoil by imposing foreign exchange controls, which didn't exactly do the trick although it displayed his resolve to clamp down on speculators.

Characteristically enough, his attempts to steady Malaysia led him to use the iron fist against his political enemies, particularly his former deputy, Anwar Ibrahim, with whom he had a falling out because of their disagreement on how best to respond to the crisis. In countries with greater democratic grace, the disagreement would have been handled cordially. But not Mahathir and Malaysia. Forthwith he ordered Anwar arrested and charged for sodomy. Anwar is now in prison, the lightning rod of the opposition.

The man who replaced Anwar is considered a lightweight in economic and financial management. Abdullah, 62, is known as the "Mr. Clean" and is noted for his caution and diplomacy. Part of the transition strategy is for Mahathir to cede more and more some of the responsibilities to him so that he can grow in knowledge and stature.

It is hoped, of course, that Abdullah's apprenticeship will so empower him that he can become his own man. In fact, the transition should provide Abdullah and others interested in succeeding Mahathir a grace period during which they can equip themselves with the necessary skills, principles and vision to lead Malaysia in the post-Mahathir era.

To be sure, any vision of the post-Mahathir era should balance the need for continuity and the need for change. Since it is expected that economic policies and programs by then will reflect the predictability and rationality that have been the hallmarks of Malaysian economic management under the Mahathir era, reforms will have to take place in the political arena. In any case, the economic achievements of the past will have to be seconded by the political reforms of the future. Affluent Malaysia can only be reaffirmed by its reinvention as "Gentler Malaysia."

The reforms will have to take the form of democratization. Greater economic openness and robustness should translate to greater political liberalization and confidence. Perhaps Mahathir this early could display that confidence by releasing Anwar.

Guingona will do the right thing by resigning

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE DECISION of Vice President Teofisto Guingona to resign as foreign secretary is the right, the statesmanly move.

In our system of government, the President makes the policies. The duty of Cabinet members is to implement these policies. If a Cabinet member does not agree with a policy and can't in conscience implement it, he must leave the Cabinet. He can't be an alter ego of the President and at the same time attack policies and decision that he made. He can criticize and attack policies and decisions within the official family, but not publicly. If he can't be a member of the team, he must leave. Once he leaves the Cabinet, he is free to criticize the administration.

Guingona, happily, sees it that way and has decided to leave the Department of Foreign Affairs. After all, a vice president does not have to have a Cabinet position. His principal role is to be the spare tire of the President. His duty is to wait until that spare tire is needed. Otherwise, he doesn't need to do anything.

When Guingona leaves the Cabinet, he remains as vice president of the nation and president of Lakas, the party of the President. As such, can he or should he criticize the President and her policies? Yes. For the good of the nation. His constituency is now that nation. He is no longer an appointee of the President who must follow her policies. And after all, the administration is not the party. As Lakas president, he sets the party policies, after consultation with other party leaders, including President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. During these consultations, they can argue and debate and, if all goes well, come to an agreement. Then, President Macapagal must follow party decisions—if she wants to stay in the party. Or, if she can do it, have those who disagree with her, expelled from the party. If not, she can leave and form her own party, like many have done in the past.

Politics is dirty business. I don't understand why anybody would want to make it his career.

* * *

Judging from its continued pronouncements in media, it seems the National Power Corp. does not care for its consumers. The Napocor wants to continue holding on to its monopoly on power generation and transmission.

Its claim that it can reduce power rates by P1.38 per kWh if all Meralco's power needs are sourced from the Napocor needs to undergo a reality check.

When Meralco used to get 100 percent of its supply from the Napocor less than one and a half years ago, it already cost 8 US cents equivalent wholesale, or P4 per kWh in today's exchange rate. The Napocor keeps talking of cheaper plants and the promise of cheaper rates but continues to charge sky-high grid rates. And whereas our Asian neighbors are selling their electricity at 5 to 6 US cents retail even without the distribution costs added, the Napocor rates are already very high.

In spite of the high rates, the Napocor was losing heavily then as it is losing heavily now. We had periodic blackouts then as we have periodic blackouts now. That is why Congress said "Enough is enough" because the government cannot continuously support with almost three-fourths of the budgetary outlay government-owned and controlled corporations like the Napocor. The scarce funds are needed by other sectors much as health, education, agriculture, etc. Thus, a law was passed to privatize and restructure the power industry.

The Napocor claims that its own plants are cheaper than Meralco's independent power producers: P1.83 per kWh Masinloc and P2.02 per kWh Ilijan. If that is so, then why is the Napocor selling to Meralco at P4.40 per kWh? Even adding the so-called ancillaries and transmission costs, the margin between these touted "lower" generation costs and the Napocor's selling rate is considerable. Makes one wonder why the Napocor is losing so much money year after year. Either they are fudging the figures or they are doing a lousy job at managing their finances.

The recent pronouncement that the Napocor's directly-connected customers do not want to transfer to Meralco belies the Napocor's earlier claim that Meralco is not subsidizing the other Napocor customers. Numerous studies conducted by the Department of Energy since 1976 confirm the fact that Meralco rates indeed subsidize the rest of the country. In other words, customers in the Meralco franchise area are paying for part of the electric consumption of customers in the rest of the country. That is why it is cheaper to get power from brand-new plants funded from commercial sources and paying all taxes.

Even the head of Transco, Asisclo Gonzaga, admitted in a hearing of the Senate committee on energy last May 16 that Meralco is indeed subsidizing the rest of the Philippines. But just one month after saying that under oath in the Senate, he now goes around claiming the contrary. Does he have two versions of the truth—one for senators and another for hapless consumers like you and me?

* * *

Today's joke:

It is not generally known, but Erap, after being thrown out of Ateneo, worked as a waiter in a restaurant. He did not last very long. Here's why:

A tourist entered the restaurant and asked Erap, "What's your specialty?"

Erap: Special tea? Uh, we have hot tea, iced tea, Japanese tea, Chinese tea, British tea, Ceylon tea, take your pick.

The tourist went away. Erap was fired.

Redemption

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE COMMENTATORS were unanimous after the game. The story of the match was Ronaldo. Indeed, the story of the World Cup was Ronaldo. He it was who scored the goal against Turkey, which brought Brazil to the finals. And he it was who scored the two goals against Germany, a flurry of goals in a titanic game that after nearly an hour seemed destined—a word that hung around this last World Cup like a yoke, or noose—toward a draw. It brought a storybook finish to a World Cup that had taken the zaniest, most fairy-tale-ish and most magical turns.

And it broke the heart of another nation that had also dared to dream. The cries and lamentations in Germany were literal. The people who had been watching the game in Berlin wept in one another's arms. My heart bled for Rudi Voeller, the German coach, whose face ran the whole gamut of human emotion as he watched the game. And who was grief-stricken, notwithstanding his Teutonic reserve, when he saw, probably in slow motion, the golden opportunity slip through his fingers like water.

But the match, and the World Cup itself, is the story of Ronaldo in more ways than that he scored the winning goals. It is the story of Ronaldo in more ways than that he duplicated Pelé's prolific scoring, racking up eight goals in as many games. It is the story of sin and redemption. It is the story of fall and salvation. It is the story of death and resurrection.

Nobody gave this Brazilian team much of a chance to succeed. Not the odds-makers who gave it a 6-1 chance of getting past its first assignments. Not the Brazilians, who gave it only a cold shoulder. I remember asking a Brazilian friend in Ecuador last year what their chances were in this World Cup. A person who took her soccer and samba deathly seriously ("I cried for days when Antonio Carlos Jobim died"), she looked heavenward and threw her hands up in despair. "No good," she said, trying to find the right English words for a thought straight from hell. "Our team is no good." The possibility they would even qualify for the games, she said almost prophetically, was slim.

I can only wonder what she's doing now. She must be dancing furiously in the streets of Sao Paolo, knowing Antonio Carlos Jobim has returned to the land of the living.

A great deal of that pessimism owed to Ronaldo. Ronaldo, the most powerful deity of Brazil's greatest faith, had failed to give proof of his divinity. Like Pelé, he had won many games for Brazil, and brilliantly, while still a youth. Unlike Pelé, he had not brought home a World Cup. In Brazil, as in other soccer-mad countries, which is to say the world, winning many games for one's country brilliantly without bringing home a World Cup equals zero. Ronaldo's time had yet to come. That time came in 1998, in France.

The Brazilian team that came to play in France was one of the most powerful Brazil had ever assembled, and the dreams of the nation—no, the fate of the nation—lay on its shoulders. They were very stout shoulders. The Brazilian powerhouse had swept through their matches with the ease of Alexander's armies marching across the world, and only France stood in the way of destiny. Alas, the young Ronaldo would prove unequal to snatching it.

A doubtful starter, having suffered a knee injury, he was made to play anyway, and the results were disastrous. Brazilians would later rue the fact that he was fielded at all. Brazil did not just suffer a defeat, it endured a humiliation. Expected to rattle off goal after goal against a hapless enemy, it had that very thing done to it. It lost to France 3-0 and was never the same since.

For all practical purposes, Ronaldo was finished. Washed up at an age when Alexander wept at the edge of the world for having nothing left to conquer. It wasn't just physically, although the physical part itself was formidable. His injury was deep, and few doctors thought he would be able to play well, or just play, again. But more than that, a nation had lost its faith in him. He was a fallen idol, in more ways than one.

No one gave the Brazilian team that sambaed into Korea and Japan much chance of success. And they proved them wrong.

Of course, it wasn't Ronaldo alone who did. The whole team did. The bit players did, showing the world Brazil wasn't just capable of attacking, it was capable of defending. Luis Felipe Scolari, the Brazilian coach, did, showing the world his decision to drill discipline and defense into a team that already brimmed with energy and talent was a burst of inspiration. Rivaldo and Ronaldinho did, showing the world the true meaning of teamwork, which was not just about passing the ball but about passing up personal glory: Rivaldo in particular wanted Ronaldo to win the Golden Boot, though he was his closest rival.

But it was Ronaldo's story above all. Or Ronaldo's story was their story, too.

A story of resurrection. When Ronaldo made that first goal, Scoliari could not be painted with words, he ran around like a chicken looking for its head before embracing aides. A story of salvation. It was Rivaldo actually who made the first and second goals possible, slamming the first ball into Oliver Kahn, the German goalie, who caught it but lost it, allowing Ronaldo to let it sail past him, on the second try, and who slid the ball past several defenders to the streaking Ronaldo who let it fly into the net for the second goal. A story of redemption. It wasn't just Ronaldo who was hoisted on the shoulders of his team the other night, tears of joy streaming down his cheeks, it was everyone who had fallen to the utter pits but had pulled himself up to catch a glimpse of heaven.

That is the stuff of which life is made. The rest is just dragging a sorry carcass in this world

Reconciliation

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

AS expected, various leaders of Lakas are now trying to inject sobriety into l'affaire Guingona and seek to "reconcile" the President and the Vice President. Even if they don't work together in the Cabinet anymore, people want to see them being civil to each other and cooperating for the nation's welfare.

As a Filipino my heart bleeds at the contrast presented by US President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, who have always presented such a unified team before the world. The most recent example was their display of coordination and harmony as Bush went through a colon examination, when he turned over the reins of government for a few hours to his vice president while he was under anesthesia. This was done to prevent any gap in the leadership especially in the light of possible terrorism. The transfer and re-transfer of power between the two top US officials went on smoothly. Here we have the spectacle of our two top leaders not talking to each other.

* * *

But if reconciliation is to take place, the first thing the Palace should do is to rein in acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable, so that he does not resort to explosive remarks like, "He can resign as foreign secretary. He is even free to resign as vice president if he wants." While indeed Guingona can give up the vice presidency under the Constitution, for the press secretary to rub it in comes across as the height of arrogance. Afable seems to be in a fighting mode after he got badly clobbered following that "mistaken" resignation of Guingona and he now seems eager to "vindicate" himself, but in the process he is making the President"s camp sound haughty. This is the wrong tactic, considering that public sympathy is probably with Guingona over the "shabby treatment" he got as the opposition terms it. That statement angered a number of citizens, including some senators.

* * *

I think people are generally clear on the principle that Cabinet members serve entirely at the pleasure of the President. What they are disturbed about is the lousy manner in which Guingona was treated despite being the country's second highest official. What should have happened, had the exit scenario for him been followed some weeks from now, was that the two top officials would appear together at a press conference to jointly announce the new plans for the Vice President, during which they will praise each other and show goodwill and amity. Letting the press secretary make the announcement of his "resignation" was a display of insensitivity that doubtless chilled the hearts of other bureaucrats. Ultimately we all fall back on the time-honored tradition of civility even in government.

* * *

A few columns back, I recounted my family's trip to Pagudpud and the northernmost tip of Luzon, as a treat for the summer. On the way back, we made a stopover at Vigan, the third most important city in this country during the 18th and 19th centuries. Founded in 1572 by Juan de Salcedo, the grandson of the Spanish conquistador Miguel Lopez de Legaspi, Vigan remains the best preserved bastion of Spanish civilization here, and its preservation is being done with the assistance of the Unesco, which declared it a World Heritage Site in 1999, and Spain. I met Vigan's two top officials, Mayor Eva Marie Singson Medina and Vice Mayor Franz Ranches, last November in Mexico, where they forged a sister-city link for Vigan with Barra de Navidad in Acapulco.

During our visit to Vigan, Medina, who is serving her last term as city executive, was in Manila, but Ranches received us and briefed us on the city's preservation efforts. A city official accompanied us on a tour of some recently restored old homes, which I enjoyed a lot.

* * *

My family and I were disturbed, however, to note that a number of old buildings in Vigan, such as colonial homes and churches, have been whitewashed recently, making them look new. This is lamentable, for what distinguishes Vigan from the rest of the country and make it a primary tourist destination are the 180 or so colonial buildings and homes along the cobbled streets. I'm afraid other home and building owners would follow suit and whitewash their edifices, destroying Vigan forever. On the other hand, we also noted that many other houses are in rather decrepit condition and need repair badly. It seems that the owners swing from not fixing things at all to over-fixing them.

* * *

I raised this point with Ranches, who chairs the Vigan Conservation Council that reviews, evaluates and recommends the approval of permits on restoration work involving ancestral structures to the National Museum and the National Historical Institute. The latter are the agencies tasked with giving out those permits. Ranches explained that the city is quite serious about conserving its colonial assets. Two years ago the city council passed an ordinance setting forth the "guidelines for conservation and preservation of Vigan ancestral houses." I noted that the guidelines are very detailed, so that the owners need not grope as they go about the task of conservation.

But Ranches also hinted that one problem is that some homeowners refuse to comply with the ordinance. In that case, I believe the city council should put more teeth into its guidelines. In many ancient towns and cities abroad, such guidelines have to be followed under pain of penalty. What seems to be urgently needed in Vigan is for some concerned citizens to form a foundation that would help owners who are in need of some funding to restore their ancestral homes.

Unethical interviewers

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FRIENDS whose children have just graduated from college fill our get-togethers with field reports from their children and their children's friends on what it's like to be young, jobless and desperate these days. But you don't even need personal ties to some *bagets* to know what it's like out there in the "first-job" market. Two recent "Youngblood" pieces detail the despair and desperation of two young persons who left college a year ago and are at their wits' end wondering why they're still jobless—this despite the fact that they went to two of the country's better schools. If graduates of Ateneo, UP and other such "A-list" schools are having a hard time getting hired, how much harder could it be for the many more who went to less recognized schools?

As if the intense competition for jobs isn't daunting enough, there's also the inclination of employers—or their agents—to take advantage of desperate jobseekers by imposing onerous conditions or, worse, exacting their pound of flesh from the innocent and unknowing.

A friend tells me, for example, about her son's girlfriend, an extremely attractive young woman, who left her job in the marketing department of a hotel when the owner, an aging Lothario with a woeful reputation, began hitting on her. Making the rounds of job interviews, she encountered a confounding phenomenon: interviewers demanding to know if she was married or single, and if single, if she had a boyfriend. In at least one company, she was told that "if you tell me you have a boyfriend, we might as well bring this interview to a close."

* * *

MY KNEE-JERK reaction was to exclaim that surely this is illegal, and that in the United States, interviewers aren't even allowed to ask an applicant's civil status or age for fear of being slapped with a discrimination suit.

But I decided to make inquiries and asked two of my best sources on labor matters: my brother Bo, who's worked for decades in the field of human resource management, and my uncle Ramon Jimenez, a long-time labor lawyer who recently published the book "Practical Guidelines in Employee Relations."

As far as he knows, said my brother, the law is silent on the matter of asking job applicants about their civil status or romantic entanglements. "All the law says is that it's illegal to discriminate against an applicant on the basis of race or religion," he said.

If an applicant feels an inquiry into whether she has a boyfriend or not constitutes invasion of privacy, "she can refuse to answer the question and say she doesn't believe it has any relevance to her work." But the applicant must realize "she runs a very big risk of not getting hired."

Ever practical, Bo suggests instead that when asked if you have a boyfriend, "just say no." But what if you happen to get married within the year? "That's fine, your employer has no way of knowing if the two of you already had a relationship at the time of the interview. An employee can't be fired without due cause, and your getting married is not a valid ground for dismissal."

* * *

"ABSOLUTELY unethical," is how my uncle describes such interview "techniques." "I very much doubt if any respectable company has a policy against married applicants or applicants who might marry soon," he says, "it might just be the interviewer's own cheap attempt at sexual harassment."

If an applicant feels sufficiently affronted by the question, this canny labor lawyer says, she shouldn't show her outrage instantly. "Keep quiet and let the interviewer ask more questions, that way when you do write his boss about the inappropriate questions, you will have more grounds on which to base your complaint." But an applicant must take note that "it's your word against his (or hers)," so be prepared to be ignored or dismissed.

My brother strongly suggests putting your complaint in writing, though. "Even if nothing happens, the interviewer's superiors will be keeping an eye out on him, now that an official complaint has been received."

If an applicant has enough gumption, says my uncle, she might summon the guts to ask the interviewer: "Pardon me, but what does my having a boyfriend have to do with my future responsibilities?" "Asking such a question might be the interviewer's way of testing your articulateness or presence of mind," he says, "but depending on the interviewer's answer, it could also give you more ammunition for your complaint."

* * *

MOST fresh graduates will probably be hired on a "probationary" basis, that is, taken in to fill up a regular, plantilla position but required to undergo a trial period no longer than six months, under the law.

In his book, Ramon Jimenez offers these "quick tips" to all employees hired as "probies":

- **Expect that you will be under observation, so be serious about your attendance, demonstrate good attitude toward your work and to your co-employees.**
- **Keep a record of your performance reports, showing a good level of performance.**
- **Make your own "flagging" schedule. Under the law, you become automatically a regular employee after six months.**

And if you manage to survive the six-month probationary period and become a regular employee, keep these "quick tips" in mind:

- **Keep documentary proof, if any, that your position is necessary and indispensable in the business of the employer (job description, memoranda, company circulars, etc.)**
- **Keep copies of performance appraisal, if any, awards, attendance record, any record of good performance.**
- **Beware of employers who have two sets of payrolls, one for employees consumption and one for the BIR.**

GMA on Culture & the Arts

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

THE FOLLOWING are excerpts from President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's address before the culture workers on June 13, 2002, since space does not allow the inclusion of the entire 11 pages.

On the National Commission for Culture and the Arts: "NCCA was made by Manang Letty (fomer Senator Shahani) as a commission precisely because it is not a department to be regulated by the national government or, to put it this way, not to be under the supervision and control of the president."

On Executive Director Ma. Fina Yonson: "She was one of the leading middle level officers of the DTI and she was so good in her job that Sef Follosco...got her as his alter ego...and I know she'll do a great job in putting order and structure in an agency...where many of the decision makers are artists and therefore have an artistic temperament and therefore have the famous lack of...I mean, artists are more intuitive than structured so all your great ideas must be translated into something workable by somebody who knows how to pencil-push and somebody who knows how to do the nitty gritty. That's the work that Muffin Yonson will do for culture in the Philippines."

Framework for culture: " I believe that culture reflects moral standards. But culture also molds moral standards...Mobilize culture to improve moral standards in society...We must mobilize culture to forge consensus on a just, lasting and honorable peace in our country. In mobilizing culture to influence moral standards, we must arrive at a national consensus on the principles to guide our search for peace."

Principles/guidelines for cultural community: "Our ultimate objective should be both peace and development. A second principle is that our framework must be based on constitutionality, national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Basis for medium-term cultural plan of the administration: "[T]he third principle...we must recognize...(is) that our society is a multi ethnic one which should be founded on social justice for all and the institutionalized accommodation of ethnic traditions."

Danger from emerging monoculture due to globalization: "To preserve and defend our culture needs planning and preparedness. That's why I have planners as chair and as executive director. These two girls are great in planning. They are great in preparedness."

Vision statement of the medium-term plan for culture and the arts: "Culture must not be moribund, must not be lacking in creativity...To achieve this vision, I would like to see that the first and primary approach is to heighten the institutionalized accommodation of ethnic traditions...I was talking to Ambeth on how he can make history so folksy. I think we should do that to culture too...We must have mass culture. We must make culture available to the masses. We must make culture attractive to the masses."

Cultural Center of the Philippines: "It's an imposing building not accessible to the masses and its very architecture, its very approach, physical approach, is not accessible to the masses. It is forbidding. It is far away. It is not folksy."

How to spend the P100-million annual culture fund: "That's why it's important to have a cultural development plan. It's important to have a framework. It's important to have a vision. It's important to know the primary approaches."

Approach, cultural supply and demand: "...[F]eed the masses with the culture of our various ethnic traditions ancient and contemporary, and therefore a method of distribution must be something approachable to the masses."

The Metropolitan Theater: "I believe...the one (building) that the poor will find approachable, physically, psychologically is the Metropolitan Theater of the Philippines in Manila...I feel that we should revive the Metropolitan Theater and make it the new home of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts."

Endowment for movies: "Mass culture is also about movies...That is why I began by advancing money from the President's social fund not to give an award to the best movies at the end of the Metro Manila Film Festival, but near the start. I've allocated an initial P50 million to spread out as subsidy for the production of the best scripts that will be chosen by the Metro Manila Film Festival Committee...I have advanced the money but I think that the NCCA should make a statement and participate in this subsidy.

"(MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando")...should ensure...that the endowment or the production subsidy contributed by the NCCA...should become a permanent fund...It should keep returning, as much as possible, to the NCCA so that you have money again for next year's subsidy.

Rice Terraces: "I am also very happy that we are going to be preserving the Ifugao Rice Terraces. When I was still vice president there was an Ifugao Rice Terraces Task Force that was organized. I was a member of the task force. But after a while I was the only one taking it seriously. I was organizing in the various towns that had rice terraces community development projects for the poorest of the poor: food for work. But that was the only specific activity that was being put forward. So when I became President, I abolished the task force because committees don't work. I believe the primary responsibility should be on the local government of Ifugao. And let us support the governor of Ifugao...Let's empower the people of Ifugao to preserve their cultural heritage."

Artist's hands

YOUNG BLOOD

B

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

MANY of the people in my circle cannot understand why I decided to end a five-year relationship with my boyfriend. I have not bothered to explain because everyone pities him and I have been called a heart-breaker and a two-timing bitch. It is as if I have suddenly turned into a source of entertainment, with everyone adding a little juicy gossip.

What makes things worse is that the guy with whom I broke up has made every effort to show how devastated he was by our break-up and there was no one else to blame but me and my cheating heart.

I do not blame other people for sympathizing with him. My girl friends find him charming. He possesses that one trait many girls find irresistible in a man: a nice sense of humor. My family thinks he is very thoughtful.

And he was all that—and more. There was a time in our relationship when I'd look at him and think I got much more than what I deserved. Later, I realized I was not mistaken. He gave me a whole lot more than I could possibly deserve.

People we both know think I broke up with him out of boredom. He was my high school classmate, my prom date, my debut escort, and my college dorm mate.

Boredom? Of course. I got bored with seeing his temper flare up whenever we argued about something. I got bored with wearing long-sleeved blouses under the heat of the sun to hide bruises on my arms. I got bored with lying to people when they asked where I got a cut or a bruise on my face. I got bored with talking to myself while crying. I got bored with hearing him say he was sorry over so many times.

He did not beat me up during the whole five years we were on. It took three years before the monster in him took over.

I cannot forget that fateful night which started everything. I had told him I met a nice guy during the summer vacation and that I needed some space to sort out my confused feelings. What came next was the sharp sensation of a fist slamming into my upper arm. Every trace of my tender feelings toward him vanished in an instant. My anger burst in a river of tears. I was confused no more.

I started to walk away but he threatened to kill himself. To show how serious he was, he banged his head against the concrete wall and punched it with his hands. He went down on his knees, with tears in his eyes and blood oozing from his head, and asked me to give him a second chance.

I was too weak to say no. I believed him when he promised never to hurt me again. I believed him when he said he would find his way back into my heart. I believed him when he said that his love would be enough for both of us. I believed in the impossible.

The two years that followed were a chart of broken promises. I received the worst birthday present in the form of a slap. I became familiar with the salty taste of blood in my mouth. I saw the world spin while my head hit the wall in a dull, rhythmic motion. I tasted shampoo in my mouth and frothed like a mad dog.

My body turned into a canvas for this rough art. I was in the merciless hands of a mad artist. Rugged mountains and angry waves were imprinted on my neck. A unicorn was the result of his ungentle touch on my arm.

I was amazed at the way my body reacted to his violence. It was forming images. The blood clots under my skin showed me an image of what I had become. What a shame that I had to hide such a magnificent piece of art from other people.

I did not hate him for hitting me. I hated him for being such a coward. He did not allow other people to appreciate his work of art. I wanted our friends to look at the images on my skin. I wanted his family to know what a fine, young artist he had become. I wanted my family to know how I had been reduced into a canvas by the young artist they so dearly admired.

The brush strokes did not stay for long. So there were times when my body was a clean, white canvas and other times when it was red, blue and black. The canvas stayed untainted until the artist was gripped with jealousy. And then when he was done with his work, he would be profuse in his apologies and plead for forgiveness, saying I was all he had.

Now I am ashamed to say this lasted for two years. How could I have allowed it to last for so long?

I have no answers. There were times when I thought I was to blame and I deserved the pain he inflicted on me. He kept reminding me that I almost cheated on him. He could not believe I wasn't keeping in touch with the other guy. He checked my e-mail and demanded that I let him examine my cellphone whenever he pleased. And I made up excuses for his actions.

I believe in and advocate women's liberation. Luckily, there were no mirrors inside the classroom or I could have pointed at a perfect example of a battered girlfriend, an unempowered woman. I could have stared at myself without knowing who it was.

My pride kept me from telling the truth to my close friends and family. I didn't want to shatter the image of the strong-willed woman they all saw in me. I felt that knowing women's rights could not save me from what I was going through. I became the insecure and weak-willed woman that I have met in literary pieces. I was the battered wife crying on television while being interviewed. I was the abused child being rushed to the emergency room of the hospital. I saw a piece of me in every person who knew violence. I became aware of the danger lying dormant in the hands of a man. I was a battered girlfriend.

Our friends speculate that there is a third party involved. There is: the same guy I fell in love with two summers ago and whose memory kept me alive during the worst two years of my life. Hatred could not take over my whole heart. The hope of new love has been slowly healing the wounds.

I can almost hear my feminist friends scream that redemption does not lie in another man's arms but in myself. But they cannot understand that I am like a boat washed ashore, almost shattered by the storm. I have oars but I need somebody to put me back to the sea. I trust that his gentle hands will help me through the storm.

I know it is only I myself who can undo the damage done to me. I do not consider myself emotionally dependent on anyone. I believe that I cannot be blamed for what happened. Most of all, I believe that it is not a sign of weakness to need somebody's help. I will not be afraid to love.

When my boyfriend first hit me, I saw the flame of our love extinguished. The blow has more than bruised me, it pushed me away from him to edge of indifference. He did not realize that pounding my head and leaving imprints on my body could not kill my spirit. The punishment only made me stronger in the end.

B, 20, is a student of the University of the Philippines in Diliman. She hopes other women will not put up with the things she went through.

Homesick, homebound

"TWO more sleeps," an American friend consoled me as she sensed how much I wanted to get back home, after almost two weeks in the States.

We Filipinos are homebodies. As my American friend had learned from frequent visits to the Philippines, from the first day we spend away from home we begin a countdown, using the number of "sleeps" (e.g., *dalawang tulog na lang*) before we get home. The "sleeps" are often troubled, as we toss and turn through the night, and not necessarily from jet lag. I have friends who will fly to Cebu and stay at the Shangri-La but still complain about having stayed up all night. *Namamahay* is the Tagalog term we use—the body, or maybe the spirit, yearns for home.

Our attachment to home and hearth makes the Filipino diaspora even more poignant. Depending on whom you ask, we have from 6 to 8 million Filipinos living overseas. Then there's the Pulse Asia survey where people were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "This country is hopeless and if it were possible I would migrate to another country and live there." A startling 19 percent agreed, and another 20 percent were undecided.

There were strong reactions to that survey finding. The President, defensive as usual, pointed out that 60 percent disagreed with the statement. Catholic Church officials reacted, too, with the INQUIRER quoting Bishop Socrates Villegas as appealing that only those without spouses and children "should take up the challenge of working abroad." Villegas said overseas work and migration had "destroyed so many families."

The Pulse Asia survey finding has gotten all of us thinking, but we need more research on both migration and overseas work, combining surveys and qualitative methods such as life stories, to find out why people want to leave. The survey question was a bit tricky—"double-barreled" in the language of social scientists. You can feel the situation is hopeless without thinking of migration. Conversely, you might want to migrate but not necessarily find the Philippines hopeless.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

I suspect class makes for very sharp differences. For the very poor, the 40 percent of the population living below the poverty line, migration and short-term overseas contractual work are not viable options. This segment of the population lacks the qualification to be able to leave and those who might qualify can't afford the application and processing fees.

For the middle class, contractual work is an option, two or three years at a time. For the men, it's mainly seafaring and construction work. For the women, it's ending up as domestic helpers, factory workers or entertainers. The destinations—Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan, the Middle East—are not hospitable ones. Filipinos are welcome only as short-term guest workers.

These overseas workers leave mainly because of economic reasons. The family's welfare is foremost, yet they have to leave the family—spouse, children—behind. On planes and in airports, I have heard so many stories, especially from the women, about having left when a youngest child was only an infant, and returning four or five years later, to find a child terrified by the sight of a stranger asking for a hug.

Overseas work is so different from migration, which is an option mainly for the upper middle class and the rich. The destinations are the United States, Canada, Australia, where it's become easier to migrate to, if you have particular skills that are needed and if you can afford the visa application and processing fees. Some even hire specialized immigration lawyers to take care of the paper work.

Unlike contractual work, the motivations for migration are not necessarily economic. Many of those who leave have, in fact, very comfortable lives here and may continue to shuttle between North America and the Philippines.

There are more pull factors at work here: a better educational system for the young, more reliable health care facilities for the older ones. Others, perhaps the ones "captured" by the Pulse Asia survey, do talk about the hopeless situation here in terms of graft and corruption, kidnappings, pollution, the difficulties of advancement without connections.

The Filipino diaspora has many faces. The two million or so Filipinos now living in the United States are migrants, but their family life and aspirations will be so very different from the 500,000 Filipinos, mostly Muslim, who have fled to Sabah, Malaysia, living as undocumented migrants.

Whether in Manila, Daly City or Kota Kinabalu, we cling to our perceptions of the home, finding ways to cope. My friend Babes Nazareno told me her youngest child couldn't sleep while she was away in the United States and a household helper found a "cure": tucking the child into bed with the mother's clothes, the ones she wore before leaving, folded under the pillow.

On my latest trip to the United States, the hotel receptionist, a Filipino, told me he flies home every year to Kamuning to see his family. *"Buti ka pa,"* he hummed sadly as he did my accounts. *"Buti ka pa,"* said the bellhop, also a Filipino, as he took my bags to the car. *"Buti ka pa,"* said the Filipino driver who drove me to the airport, as he unloaded by bags.

Buti ka pa. A literal translation, "Good for you," falls flat. Said by an overseas worker to someone going home, it means "How very lucky you are!" and much more: "I will go home too, someday. *Ilang tulog na lang.*" A few more sleeps.

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Proud to be among Filipinos

I AM a foreigner, but my heart and mind have long belonged to the Philippines. My wife is a Filipina and so are my children. I am writing in the hope of contributing a thought.

The feelings, emotions, concern and caring expressed by Sheryl Cuales, Maring, Alan Tolentino, Simon Caday, Jose Cunanan, Mayumi, Karina Herrera, Edgardo Enriquez, Dominador Rubia, Augusta Balanoy, Empong Migabok, Annabelle Dilag, Voltaire Arzadon, Rowena Galicia, Gretchen Valdez, Jay Erastain, Leticia Aquino, Crispulo de la Cruz, Juliana Balanag, Jesette Christine David, Melba Brutas, Joergie Loredo, Ana Abaya and all other Filipinos who think about the subject, and mind you, all of them do think about the subject, are heartwarming. (PDI, 6/23/02)

Their love, care and concern are some of the reasons we can be proud to be Filipinos! In contrast, and as Augusta Balanoy said, "if one denies his or her being a Filipino because of the problems of the country, the person refuses to be part of the solution to these problems that may turn the hard-won battles of our ancestors useless." Reason for Jose Rizal and Ninoy Aquino to turn in their graves? No, absolutely not, because Filipinos will always remain Filipinos at heart. Perhaps they just don't know what to do and how to go about solving our problems as a nation. But be assured, they feel the pain, they do care and they do want to help.

We ought to consider how long it took the so-called developed nations to arrive at their present status. Of course, the fact of their not having been colonized during the past few hundred years accounts for probably many decades or even a century to make up for. But there's no sense in dwelling too long on that particular thought; we've got to get on with the job.

On the other hand, the sincere criticism expressed by Filipinos in your paper as well as so many others, ought not to be left unheeded by the people in power. For make no mistake, at the end of the day, and even if it takes years, the people will judge and their judgment could be cruel.

Elections are always a welcome barometer to assess where we are, and as we proceeded from dictatorial exploitation to a so-called more democratic system, which of course is still occupied by many carrying "heavy baggage" from the past, perhaps it is time to take another step forward and reward the Filipino with a more honest representation in government. In other words, make your vote count against the corrupt, the vested interest, the *balato* swingers and similar characters.

I have no doubt that over time, the Philippines will be a great nation, although I know already that Filipinos are wonderful people and I am damn proud to be among them.

To a female Filipino friend of mine, who once replied to me in the negative when asked if the Filipino is worth dying for, I say, every decent human being is worth the sacrifice and there certainly are plenty of them in the Philippines.

—JOHANNES G. JAHNS,
johannes@mydestiny.net

Leaving the country a cowardly choice

ACCORDING to a recent survey, for every five Filipinos, one wants to leave the country, or almost 20 percent of the population "because they feel that this country is going nowhere... and (they) are desperate."

Before these people think of migrating elsewhere, they must first weigh all the possibilities and consequences of such a move because living in another country is not heaven either. There are social costs to pay as well as great financial burdens to bear.

In other words, it is not an easy thing to do especially for those who are not young anymore. Certainly emigrating is neither a picnic nor a party!

Nothing can compensate for the separation from our loved ones. We all have only one life to live and wasting it in search of "a better life" is a very serious step to take. As the saying goes, *"Nasa huli ang pagsisisi."* Can they afford to carry that cross through their remaining years?

I agree that our country is kind of messy after all that happened to us in the past decades. But it is never too late to make things right. We owe that to ourselves and the generations to come.

If we are in a rut, so to speak, we all have to share in the blame because a nation can only be great and worthy of respect if everyone of us does his share.

I have always said while in public service that the most important word in the dictionary is the word "concern" for a concerned person is able to love and care for his or her fellowmen.

Maybe we have lost concern for our country which is why some cowards want to jump ship. They just want the easy way out. But life is not that way. We all have our crosses to bear.

My personal opinion is that what is happening to us is not real but artificial. It is a question of pinpointing the culprits and masterminds and perpetrators of destabilization on a grand scale. Some powerful and evil individuals will not let go of their ambition to get what they want—at all costs.

There are such groups. Former President Corazon C. Aquino had her share in her time and we know already who they are. During the term of President Fidel V. Ramos, he, too, had his share of people who wanted to destroy his image to put his administration down. They did it through kidnappings and all other criminal acts We also know who they are.

I am no soothsayer. But I know what is happening in our country today. The very same group will not allow President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to succeed for they feel that if she succeeds, that, too, will translate into success for our already suffering people.

The very same people with murderous schemes are still around to bring this country down just to grab power for themselves in 2004.

I pray to God they will not get away with it this time. And we must always remember that people with these nasty attitudes are rather difficult to change. They were born that way and will die that way.

If only we can excise them from our society, the Philippines will surely be great again.

A few in power with their vast ill-gotten wealth are manipulating the course of our nation solely for their satisfaction—and the hell with the rest of us.

—MANUEL L. MORATO,
Quezon City

Invading the privacy of cell phone users

MAY I call the attention of the concerned agency of the government, perhaps the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to the seemingly unregulated sending by mobile phone companies to their subscribers of unsolicited text messages ranging from lotteries to games to advertisements.

These SMS trash is a nuisance to the millions of mobile phone subscribers who are paying for the services of these companies and yet are being made to bear the daily barrage of advertisements and promotional gimmicks that do not really redound to the benefit of the former but are in fact snatching from many their hard-earned peso the easy way.

I think that it's about time the NTC protected the consumers by disallowing these telecom firms from making use of their facilities to frequently annoy and unnecessarily disturb paying cellphone users with messages that don't really serve them. Imagine the irritation and disappointment a businessman waiting for a message from a prospective business partner or of a parent expecting an important text message from his child when he is interrupted by some useless, irritating text messages from the company promoting inane programs. The public is helpless before this onslaught because we cannot block these messages.

The DTI, for its part, should regulate these unscrupulous advertising practice by telecom firms that dupe their subscribers into joining endless lotteries and games that are tantamount to gambling and whose only goal, apparently, is to earn more money at our expense. It would only be right that government permits for these activities are revoked or denied if only to be fair to the consumers whose privacy is, in effect, being invaded and violated by these gimmicks. For unless the government takes a direct hand in regulating private business for the good of the public, we will all remain at the mercy of big business.

—ALVIN T. CLARIDADES,
231 G. Talag St.,
Catanghalan, Obando,
Bulacan

Another disappointing appointment

SO Hermogenes Ebdane is going to be the next head of the PNP? We can all sleep well, especially the members of kidnap gangs. Thanks to Hermogenes Ebdane, I now know that the escape of the leader of the Pentagon gang from Camp Crame, the heart of the country's so-called security forces, was not another disaster for the forces of law and order. It was only "an unfortunate incident." Thank goodness for that, I was getting worried.

And how suspicious of me to think that such a break out could only have been achieved with the connivance of very senior people at Camp Crame (of course, paid with ransom money collected by the Pentagon gang). When asked whether it was an inside job, our future top cop replied, "I won't believe that." What a farce.

This is the same Ebdane who asks us to believe that no ransom was paid for the "escape" of heiress Charmaine Go a few weeks ago. And yet how could he know, given that the family refused all contact with the police? It is almost impossible to believe that a kidnap gang would go to the trouble of first identifying and then kidnapping Go and then simply let her escape without payment of ransom. My problem is not with the Go family, which was faced with an almost impossible dilemma, but a political-military establishment that treats us all like morons.

Hermogenes Ebdane is another great GMA appointee.

—JUAN GONZALES,
2010 A. Mabini St.,
Manila

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

5 YEARS BACK IN CHINA

HK protesters demand democracy

HONG KONG—As protesters lashed out at Beijing's "murderous regime," President Jiang Zemin marked Hong Kong's first five years back in China by saying Monday it had retained its capitalist ways and now should better support the mainland.

Right after Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa was sworn in to a second term, Jiang urged everyone in the former British colony to "keep enhancing their sense of the country and of the nation."

Outside the anniversary ceremonies-and out of earshot of the dignitaries-demonstrators clamored for improved human rights in the mainland, an accounting for the 1989 massacre of students in and around Beijing's Tiananmen Square and an "end to the one-party dictatorship."

The protests showed Hong Kong retains Western-style freedoms unheard of in mainland China, although pro-democracy activists complained police are making it more difficult to get their message out.

"Down with Jiang Zemin," several dozen chanted as they marched with a mock coffin condemning China's "murderous regime."

Police halted them at one point, saying they wanted to check the coffin for nails or spikes that could be used to hurt people.

"Every time we protest against Jiang Zemin, we can barely move one step forward," grumbled veteran activist "Longhair" Leung Kwok-hung.

Nearby, about 100 Falun Gong practitioners sat in lotus positions in a silent appeal for Beijing to stop its deadly crackdown on the meditation group outlawed in China as an "evil cult."

Falun Gong remains legal in Hong Kong but followers griped immigration officials prevented more than 100 followers from entering to attend the protests.

The Hong Kong Security Bureau declined to discuss specifics but said police needed to ensure visitors "would not cause trouble."

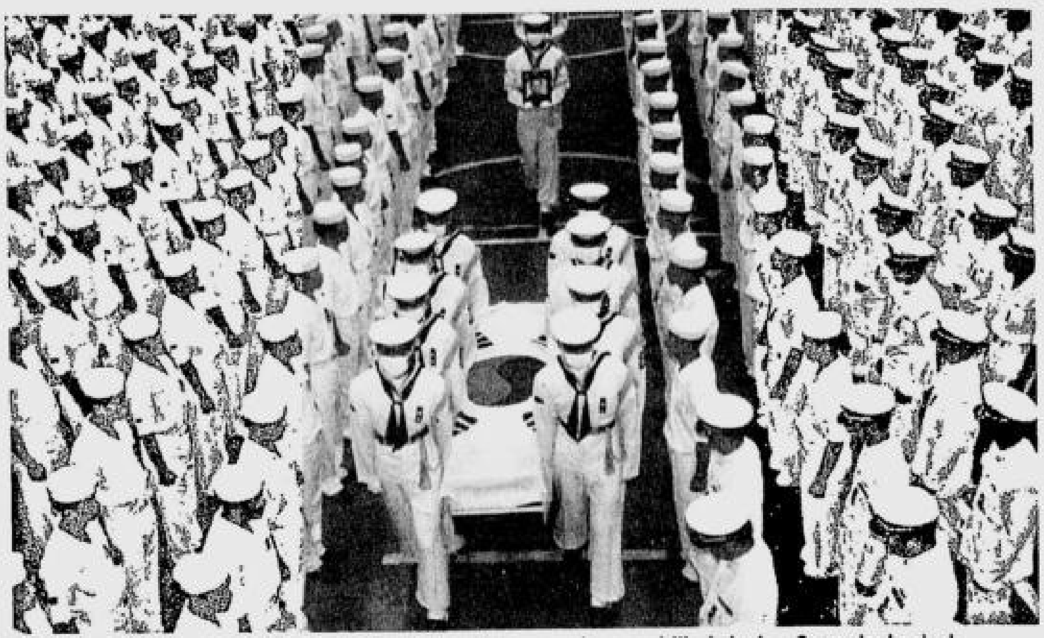
Under cloudy morning skies, a police band solemnly hoisted the Chinese and Hong Kong flags to mark Hong Kong's return from Britain to China on July 1, 1997.

"It aroused a lot of patriotic feelings in me," said retired businessman Kao Lap, who waved a flag while singing along with China's national anthem. "I think things can improve and I hope the next five years will be better."

The territory in a "one country, two systems" arrangement that allows for considerable local autonomy and freedoms.

Jiang said the policy had worked well and "the capitalist system and the lifestyle that Hong Kong residents are accustomed to have remained unchanged."

Jiang said he hoped "people of all circles in Hong Kong will do still a better job in adapting themselves to the new Hong Kong after 1997 and become better masters of Hong Kong and of our great motherland." *AP*



SOUTH Korean sailors carry a casket of a colleague, who was killed during Saturday's clash between South and North Korean naval vessels, during a funeral at a military hospital in Seoul on July 1, 2002. REUTERS

S. Korea holds memorial for sailors slain in skirmish

SEOUL—Hundreds of sailors and family members, some weeping, bowed Monday during a funeral service for four South Korean sailors killed in a sea skirmish with a North Korean patrol boat.

Draped with South Korean flags, the coffins of the men were carried into a gymnasium at a military hospital in southern Seoul.

"That can't be my husband," wailed widow Kang Jung-sun, whose husband, Sgt. Cho Chun-hyong, was among the dead. "He will come back if I go home and wait."

North Korea has refused South Korean demands for an apology for the incident Saturday, saying the maritime border where the clash took place was illegal and should be abolished.

The South Korean military said North Korea suffered about 30 casualties in the fight, though independent confirmation was not possible.

The western sea border was calm Monday.

At the memorial service, a distraught Park Kong-sun, mother of slain Sgt. Hwang Do-hyun, knelt on the floor and pounded it with her hands.

"How am I going to live. My baby, how are we going to live?" she said.

"Your spirit will live forever in our hearts and in this country and the sea," Adm. Chang Chung-kil, chief of naval operations, said in a tribute to the slain sailors.

The fight broke out after two North Korean patrol vessels accompanying fishing boats crossed the sea frontier and one opened fire after ignoring warnings to retreat, South Korean officials said. North Korea, however, accused South Korean boats of provoking the battle by entering communist territory.

The skirmish was a setback to South Korean President Kim Dae-jung's "sunshine" policy of trying to engage the isolated North. Opposition lawmakers say the policy is too lenient.

Despite the tension, both sides were willing to maintain some contacts.

A day after the sea skirmish, North Korea congratulated South Korea on its success in co-hosting the soccer World Cup, the North's Korean Central News Agency said.

South Korea's Unification Minister, Jeong Se-hyun, said nongovernmental contacts with North Korea would continue, the Yonhap news agency reported Monday.

"We will proceed with civilian exchanges and cooperation while doing our best to guarantee our people's safety," Jeong said.

A total of 540 South Koreans left by ship on Sunday on a sightseeing tour of scenic Diamond Mountain on North Korea's east coast. The tourist program is a major source of cash for the impoverished North.

Later Monday, South Korean Defense Minister Kim Dong-shin met Gen. Leon LaPorte, who commands the 37,000 US troops stationed in South Korea. The United States, South Korea's chief ally, has expressed support for South Korea.

LaPorte and Kim agreed to discuss making possible changes to their "rules of engagement" on sea to enable swifter response to North Korean hostilities, said Hwang Ui-don, a defense ministry spokesperson. *AP*

Defector tale highlights risk of journey to South Korea

POHANG—Yoo Sang-joon lives in a small apartment bare of furniture, except for a plastic coat rack and a used TV set he watches for hours on end. The defector from North Korea seldom talks with neighbors.

"I lost both my sons and I am alone alive in this affluent South Korea. I ask myself, 'What kind of father are you?'" says Yoo, a short man with spiky hair who speaks softly, his hands locked in front.

Yoo, 39, says he has tried to settle into his new home, but his mind keeps returning to the windswept plains of Mongolia.

There, under a white wooden cross, lies one of his sons, Chul Min, whose death illustrates the risks faced by North Korean asylum-seekers who take on long journeys in search of food and freedom.

Dozens of North Koreans have taken shelter in foreign embassies and missions in China in recent months, and have won passage to South Korea, and others have trekked out to other countries. More than 510 have found their way to the South this year.

But many of those who have come in recent years anguish over family members left behind.

"I will have no peace of mind until I save enough money, and enough governmental support, to go back and bring my son's remains to rest in South Korea, the place he had wanted to come so much," says Yoo, who got here in late 2000.

He used to work on a collective farm in Chungjin in northeastern North Korea, where conditions are among the harshest in that impoverished and secretive communist-ruled country. Hills around Yoo's village already had been stripped of trees by people trading firewood for food when famine hit North Korea in the mid-1990s.

In the spring of 1997, Yoo's 5-year-old son, Chul Woong, weakened and died. Soon after, his sickly wife withered away as well.

The next spring, like thousands of other North Koreans, Yoo and his remaining child, 8-year-old Chul Min, crossed the Tumen River into China to look for food. *AP*

Taiwan pays no attention to handover anniversary

TAIPEI—Hong Kong was supposed to be a showcase for Taiwan about how good life could be under Chinese rule.

But as the former British colony celebrated the fifth anniversary of its return to China on Monday, few on this island were enthusiastic about following the Hong Kong model and rejoining the mainland. Taiwan and China split amid civil war in 1949.

Many Taiwanese didn't even pay attention to the festivities in Hong Kong, where Chinese President Jiang Zemin said in a morning speech that "the eventual reunification of the motherland is the common aspiration of all Chinese."

When asked about the pomp in Hong Kong, Taipei bank teller Andy Fu tilted his head, furrowed his brow and paused for a moment before asking, "What's going on there? What are they celebrating?"

His colleagues were also stumped until a reporter reminded them about the handover anniversary, and they broke out in embarrassed laughter.

They weren't completely to blame for forgetting about the anniversary. Most of Taiwan's five 24-hour cable news stations didn't provide close coverage of the event. The popular TVBS cable news showed a few minutes of Jiang's speech live, but then quickly cut away to cover a drowning in southern Taiwan.

Hong Kong returned to China on July 1, 1997, under an arrangement called "one country, two systems," which recognizes Beijing's sovereignty but allows for considerable local autonomy and freedoms in the capitalist territory.

China's communist leaders frequently hold up Hong Kong as proof to the Taiwanese that Beijing can honor a deal and tolerate things prohibited in the mainland: protests, a free press, opposition parties and other Western-style freedoms mainlanders can only dream about.

But the Taiwanese aren't buying it. Most polls show little support for "one country, two systems." Only one political party—the fringe New Party—endorsed Beijing's plan, but the group's presidential candidate got less then one percent of the vote in the election two years ago.

Many Taiwanese—who elect their president and legislature in popular elections—scoff at Hong Kong for its lack of a full democracy.

"The territory is being run by an unelected clique of tycoons without a shred of accountability to anyone except their equally unelected political masters in Beijing," an editorial in the Taipei Times said Monday. *AP*

Suu Kyi trip a 'success'

RANGOON—Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi's first unhindered political trip outside Burma's capital was "successful" and she planned to make similar visits to other parts of the military-ruled country, party officials said.

Suu Kyi returned to Rangoon on Sunday night after a nine-day tour during which she met with local officials of her National League for Democracy in several towns as well as in Mandalay, Burma's second-largest city.

It was her first political trip outside the capital since her release from house arrest May 6, and demonstrated the military junta's willingness to keep its promise to give her political latitude as part of a reconciliation process.

"It was a very successful political trip," U Lwin, the spokesman of the National League for Democracy party, told The Associated Press on Sunday night.

Suu Kyi received a tumultuous welcome in all the towns and villages she stopped on her way to Mandalay, 560 km (350 miles) north of Rangoon, party officials said. She discussed party organization with local NLD officials and made a brief public appearance in Mandalay to thank people for their support, said a party member who accompanied her.

The crowds refrained from shouting any anti-government slogans, apparently to demonstrate a spirit of reconciliation, the party member said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

When Suu Kyi made campaign tours in late 1988 and 1989, before her party swept a general election that was ignored by Burma's military, she was harassed by authorities and later placed under house arrest for six years. *AP*

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- Any resident of the Philippines of legal age who deposits a minimum of P10,000.00 or U.S.$500.00 on the 1st of the month and does not withdraw that particular deposit within a 30-day cycle; or maintains an average daily balance (ADB) of P10,000.00 for Peso accounts or U.S. $500.00 for U.S. Dollar accounts within a 30-day cycle.
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HOW DO I GET A RAFFLE NUMBER?
- Depositors with a minimum deposit of P10,000.00 or U.S.$500.00 on the 1st of the month maintained within a 30-day cycle will be automatically assigned a system-generated raffle number.
- You may also open an account or deposit any day within the month, provided you maintain the minimum required ADB by the end of the prescribed cycle.
- Every ADB of P10,000.00 or U.S.$500.00 entitles a depositor to a raffle number.
- Raffle numbers are electronically generated by the bank's computer system and assigned per account. This is witnessed by a PSBank Senior Officer and a DTI representative.
- The list of qualified depositors with their corresponding raffle number/s for the month will be available for inquiry from the Branch heads and will be posted in all PSBank branches nationwide.
- A depositor may secure his/her raffle number/s from his/her branch on the first week after each 30-day cycle.
- Even if a depositor decides not to secure his/her raffle number from his/her branch, a raffle number will automatically be assigned to his/her account if the aforesaid account meets the minimum ADB pre-requisite of P10,000.00 and/or U.S.$500.00 within a 30-day cycle.

HOW MANY RAFFLE NUMBERS WILL I GET?
- For Peso accounts, one raffle number will be issued per ADB increments of P10,000.00. The higher your ADB (e.g. P20,000.00 gets 2 raffle numbers; P30,000.00 gets 3 raffle numbers and so on), the more raffle numbers you get, the more chances of winning.
- For U.S. Dollar accounts, your minimum ADB of U.S.$500.00 qualifies you to two (2) raffle numbers. For every U.S.$250.00 increment you get one (1) additional raffle number.
- All raffle numbers will be electronically-generated at the end of a 30-day cycle, in the presence of a senior officer of PSBank and a DTI representative at the PSBank Center, Paseo de Roxas Ave., Makati City.

ARE AGGREGATE ACCOUNTS INCLUDED?
- Aggregating accounts (or a combination of accounts) are automatically disqualified from the raffle. Your account/s (Savings or Checking) must separately have a minimum ADB of P10,000.00 and/or U.S.$500.00 to qualify.

HOW WILL THE RAFFLE DRAW BE CONDUCTED?
- The selection of winners will be electronically-generated within the first week of each month at the close of banking hours (between 5:00-6:00 p.m.) in the presence of a PSBank senior officer and a DTI representative at the PSBank Center, Paseo de Roxas Ave., Makati City.
- The system shall refresh the raffle database after each draw. Non-winning raffle numbers are voided after each raffle draw.
- A new set of raffle numbers will be assigned to qualified depositors and or accounts for the next draw provided the minimum ADB is met. This also means that depositors will have up to 6 chances of winning.

WHAT ARE THE PRIZES TO BE WON?
- All prizes are tax free.

Draw Date	Cash Prizes
August 09	1 winner of P1,000,000.00 Consolation Prizes: 10 winners of P10,000.00 each 100 winners of P1,000.00 each
September 06	1 winner of P1,000,000.00 Consolation Prizes: 10 winners of P10,000.00 each 100 winners of P1,000.00 each
October 11	1 winner of P1,000,000.00 Consolation Prizes: 10 winners of P10,000.00 each 100 winners of P1,000.00 each

Draw Date	Cash Prizes
November 08	1 winner of P1,000,000.00 Consolation Prizes: 10 winners of P10,000.00 each 100 winners of P1,000.00 each
December 06	1 winner of P1,000,000.00 Consolation Prizes: 10 winners of P10,000.00 each 100 winners of P1,000.00 each
Grand Raffle Draw January 10, 2003	Grand Prize: 1 winner of P3,000,000.00 Consolation Prizes: 1 winner of P100,000.00 2 winners of P50,000.00 each

HOW DO I CLAIM THE CASH PRIZE/S?
- All cash prizes shall be automatically credited to the winner's PSBank savings or checking account.
- Winners will be asked to sign an acknowledgment form for receipt of the cash prize in the presence of the PSBank Branch Head where the account was opened and where the prize money was likewise credited.

WHEN IS THE GRAND DRAW?
- The Grand Draw shall be conducted electronically, at the close of banking hours on January 10, 2003 (between 5:00– 6:00 p.m.) in the presence of PSBank senior officers and a representative of DTI at the PSBank Center, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

HOW WILL I KNOW I WON?
- A winners list shall be posted in all PSBank branches and published in a leading daily newspaper.
- All winners will be notified through registered mail, fax, email and telephone.

WHO ARE DISQUALIFIED FROM JOINING THE PROMO?
- Employees of PSBank, Metrobank and its affiliates and subsidiaries, the advertising agency, and their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity, are disqualified from joining the promotion.

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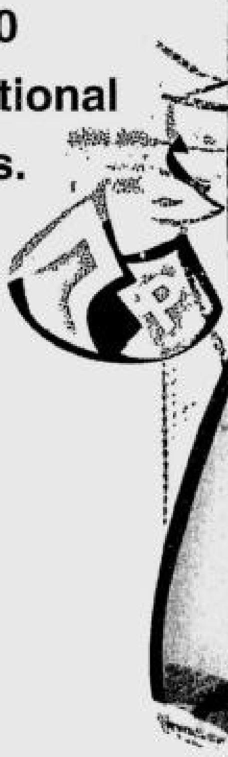

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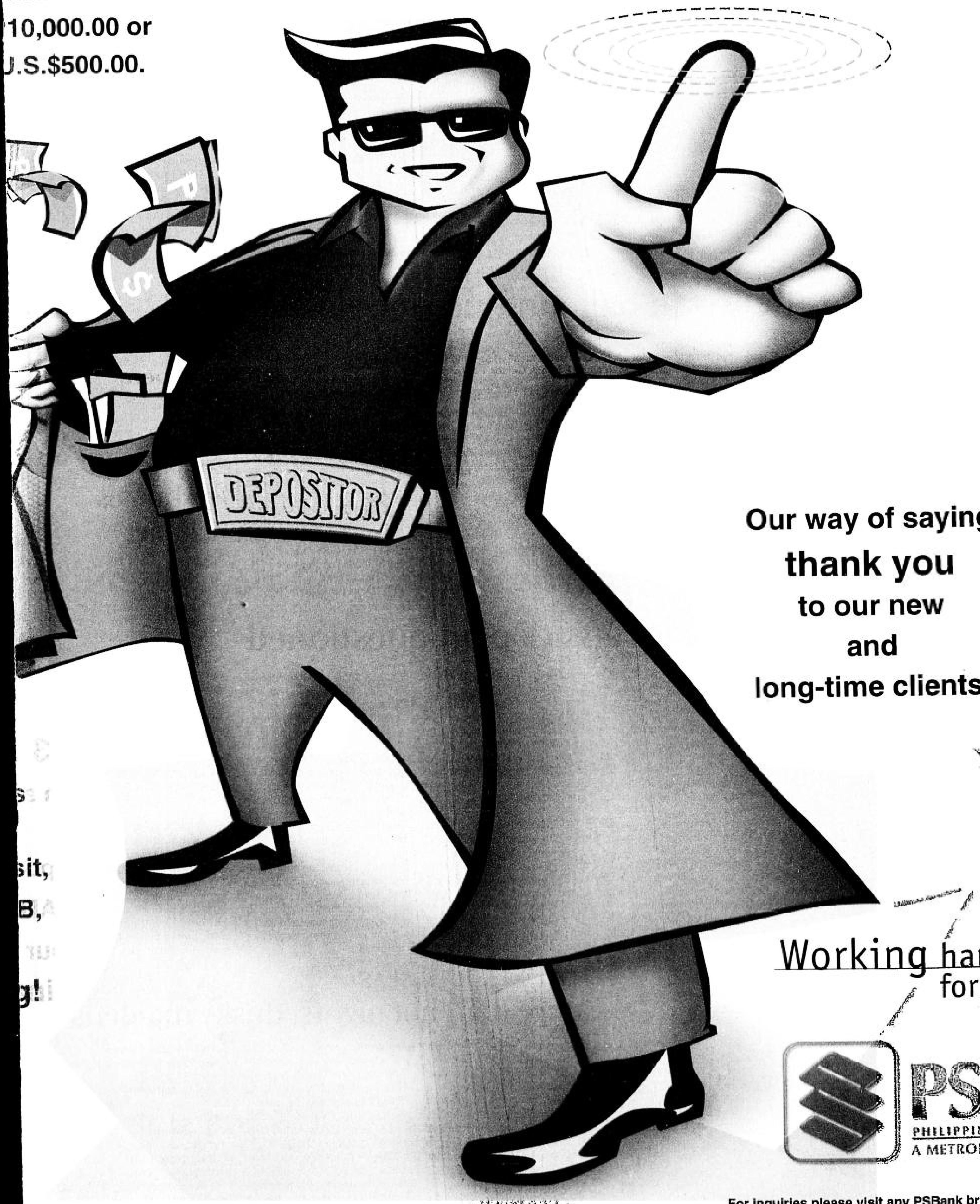

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Hamas vows to avenge killing of its leader

JERUSALEM—Hamas extremists promised Monday to avenge Israel's assassination of a senior West Bank bomb-maker for the Islamic militant group who Israel said was responsible for the deaths of nearly 120 people.

Mohaned Tahir, 26, was killed Sunday when an Israeli tank hit a house in the West Bank city of Nablus where he was living, striking a serious blow to Hamas.

The Israeli Army said Tahir was responsible for a June 18 bus attack in Jerusalem that killed 19 Israelis—and prompted Israel's latest West Bank military campaign that has taken over most major West Bank towns and cities. It said he also was behind a June 2001 suicide bombing at a Tel Aviv disco that killed 21 others, most of them teen-agers.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon called Tahir's killing "a very important operation" of self-defense for Israel. "I speak about a murderer that committed the most terrible crimes, and our position is—and I am glad it is also the position of President Bush—that there is no compromise with terror." The United States has supported Israel's right to defend itself, though Washington has said it opposes such targeted killings.

Sources within Hamas described Tahir as a leading bomb-maker in the group's military wing, Izzadine al-Qassam.

In Gaza, Hamas spokesperson Ismail Abu Shanab called Tahir's killing a "dirty crime" and, when asked if Hamas planned revenge, said: "Our people cannot forget the blood of their heroes and their people killed."

Hamas sources in the West Bank, speaking on condition of anonymity, said revenge for Tahir's death was their top priority.

Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer brushed off the threats and said Israel would continue to do whatever was necessary to protect itself against suicide bombers.

"There is no lack of engineers," Ben-Eliezer told Israeli radio, using the Palestinian term for bomb-makers. Tahir, he said, was involved in nearly every Hamas bombing in the past few months—building bombs, planning attacks and preparing bombers.

Imad Darwazeh, 37, was also killed in the Israeli strike. Palestinians say Darwazeh was not a known Hamas activist. His brother, Salah Darwazeh, had been a member of Izzadine al-Qassam and was killed in an Israeli missile strike in July 2001.

Hamas doesn't recognize the state of Israel and is responsible for many of the 71 suicide bombings that have killed more than 200 Israelis in the past 21 months.

Tahir spent three years in a Palestinian prison but was released in September 2000, when the Palestinian uprising erupted after peace talks collapsed.

In the Gaza Strip, Palestinian security officials, residents and hospital officials in Rafah refugee camp said that before dawn Monday, Israeli tanks and armored personnel carriers moved into a neighborhood, firing on houses. They said residents fled and Palestinian gunmen engaged soldiers in a firefight; three Palestinians were injured.

Bulldozers demolished seven houses and damaged two others before leaving, residents said. The Army said it destroyed three abandoned buildings near the Gaza-Egypt border and that grenades and explosives were directed at its troops, who returned fire. One soldier was slightly injured, the army said. **AP**

2 grenades hit airfield used by US military in Afghanistan

BAGRAM—Two rocket-propelled grenades were fired at an airfield in southern Afghanistan used by US Special Forces troops, a military spokesperson said Monday. No injuries were reported.

Col. Roger King said it was not known who fired the grenades late Sunday, which exploded within the grounds of the airfield near the southern city of Kandahar. He declined to say how close the explosions were to US forces, though he said no equipment was damaged.

US forces did not return fire because they could not determine which direction the grenades came from, King said. Special Forces troops were searching for the source of the attack in the desert area.

"It was enough of a concern that we wanted to go out and find out who was shooting at us," King told reporters at Bagram air base near Kabul, the capital, which is the headquarters of US military operations in Afghanistan. "But it's not like somebody penetrated our perimeter." **AP**

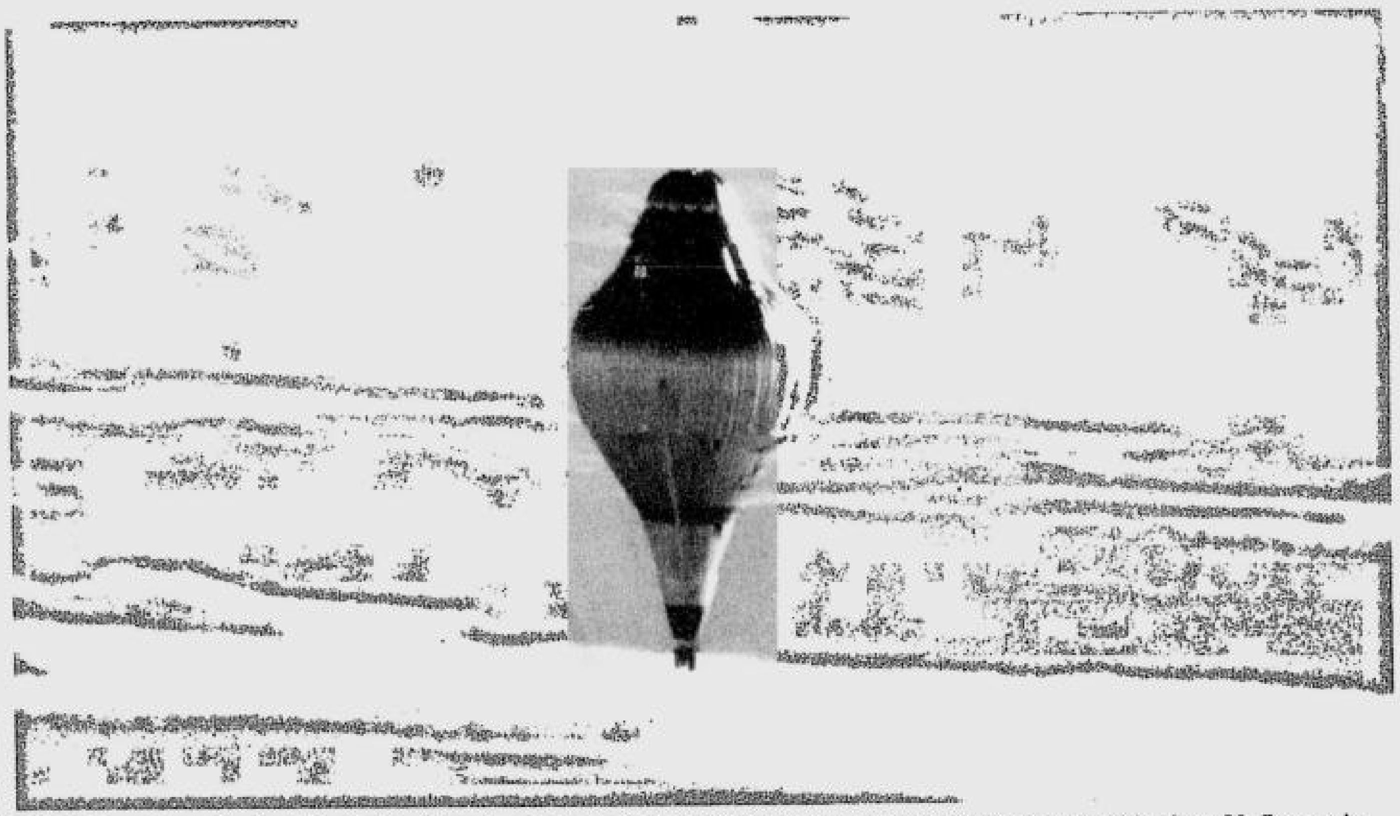
First Internet cafes to open in Kabul

KABUL—After decades of near-total communications isolation, Afghans are about to make a leap onto the World Wide Web with the opening of the country's first Internet cafes.

"We plan to open up to three Internet cafes in Kabul within the next two to three weeks," said Alex Grinling, managing director of the Afghan Wireless Communication Company (AWCC), which will become the war-ravaged country's first Internet provider.

Afghanistan took a major step forward in the telecommunications field in April when the state-affiliated AWCC launched the first cellular telephone network. President Hamid Karzai placed a call to an Afghan refugee living in Germany, something nearly impossible through the old telephone lines that served the hardline Islamic Taliban regime.

The nation's thirst for telecommunications became apparent during the loya jirga, the grand council that met last month to choose a new national leadership. All week, delegates chatting into cellular phones strolled the sunny plaza outside the meeting hall, and were provided a temporary Interner access in a nearby hotel. **AP**



PILOT Steve Fossett's Bud Life Spirit of Freedom balloon floats at 6,550 meters near the coast of South Africa June 30. Fossett is embarking on his last leg across the Indian Ocean to return to Australia to complete the first solo circumnavigation of the World by balloon.

AP

Around-the-world balloon quest on last leg

ST. LOUIS—At speeds rivaling a race car, American adventurer Steve Fossett was cruising Monday over the Indian Ocean with hopes of reaching Australia and his around-the-world balloon quest's finish line on Tuesday.

Shortly before 0700 GMT Monday, the Chicago millionaire and his balloon were zipping along at 315 kph at 9,710 meters, riding a jet stream on the final leg of his sixth bid to become the first solo balloonist to circle the globe.

"This is an amazing speed for a balloon," said David Perlman, shift supervisor at Fossett's mission control at Washington University in St. Louis. "To be going that fast based just on wind is quite amazing."

Weather and equipment permitting, Fossett, 58, was expected to complete the trip as early as Tuesday after two weeks in the air, ending a quest that began June 18 in western Australia.

"We're really getting excited here," Perlman said. "We've been waiting for this for such a long time."

As of early Monday, Fossett had traveled 26,633 km, more than 85 percent of the way.

Later Monday, Fossett was expected to fly through heavy clouds and perhaps even snow at 9,000 meters. Hot air inside the balloon should keep snow or ice from collecting on it, and Fossett eventually could descend to allow any ice to melt, his flight center said.

On Sunday, Fossett broke his own 4-year-old record for distance traveled by a solo balloonist. He went 22,904 km in 1998, when his attempt from Argentina ended with his balloon's harrowing 8,700-meter plunge into the Coral Sea.

Fossett in 1998 actually traveled 24,457 km, but the Switzerland-based Federation Aeronautique Internationale shaved his mileage to account for his zigzags, which don't count toward records.

Last August, Fossett set a solo balloonist duration record, flying for 12 days, 12 hours and 57 minutes before ditching on a cattle ranch in Brazil.

No balloonist has successfully made the around-the-world trip alone, though Swiss pilot Bertrand Piccard and English co-pilot Brian Jones did it as a team in March 1999 in the Northern Hemisphere.

Fossett holds world records in ballooning, sailing and flying airplanes. He also swam the English Channel in 1985, placed 47th in the Iditarod dog sled race in 1992 and participated in the 24 Hours of Le Mans car race in 1996. **AP**

2nd federal employee held in string of US wildfires

LOS ANGELES—Another federal employee appeared in a federal court Sunday on charges of arson for deliberately starting the second in a string of the worst-ever wildfires to ravage the bone-dry western United States.

A Bureau of Indian Affairs contract firefighter appeared in a Flagstaff, Arizona, federal court on charges he deliberately started the Rodeo wildfire that, since it merged last weekend with the Chediski fire, has devoured more than 181,000 hectares of the southwestern US state.

US Attorney Paul Charlton said the arrest late Saturday of Leonard Gregg, who has also admitted to starting another smaller fire, was based on evidence that "indicates that (he) started the fire so as to earn money as a contract firefighter.

"This fire started with a profit motive behind it," Charlton said. A US magistrate ordered Gregg held without bond.

The 29-year-old resident of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation is the second US government employee charged in the wildfires that have displaced thousands of residents in several states and stretched to the limit the resources available to fight them. **AFP**

Mahathir's power transfer plan questioned

KUALA LUMPUR—A senior Malaysian opposition leader on Monday accused Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of failing to groom a successor and urged the government to reconsider its blueprint for transferring political power.

Lim Kit Siang, chair of the Democratic Action Party, said there might be "other options" on how to implement a power transition following Mahathir's aborted June 22 attempt to step down.

Mahathir, who has led Malaysia since 1981, stunned the country when he announced at his ruling party's annual congress that he was resigning. Watched by millions of Malaysians on national television, party leaders mobbed him at the podium. He was persuaded to retract the resignation.

Under a plan announced three days later, Mahathir will hand over his powers as party chief and head of government to his deputy, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, over the next 16 months to ensure stability.

On Monday, Lim urged Mahathir to account for his actions when he returns to Malaysia on Wednesday from vacation. Mahathir, who left for Italy on June 23, has not appeared in public since the party assembly.

"He should explain why he had not groomed Abdullah properly for a smooth and orderly transition as his successor," Lim said in a statement. "There should be room for discussion and debate as to whether this is the best transition plan possible for Mahathir, Abdullah and the country."

Lim, one of Mahathir's oldest rivals, did not give any suggestions about how the Malaysian leader's political exit should take place.

Abdullah said earlier in the day that Malaysians and the financial markets had accepted the transition plan, which will see Mahathir giving up power after hosting an Islamic summit in October 2003.

The stock market has stabilized since the plan was announced, but the benchmark index on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange still remained 18.70 points lower Monday from its level before the resignation flip-flop.

Abdullah, 62, is as experienced in high office as anyone in the government, after serving as education, defense and foreign minister before becoming Mahathir's deputy in January 1999.

He replaced Anwar Ibrahim, who was fired four months earlier amid disputes with Mahathir and became a rallying point for the opposition.

Anwar is now serving prison sentences totaling 15 years for corruption and sodomy. He claims the charges were concocted to prevent a political challenge to Mahathir, but the government denies any conspiracy. **AP**

Vajpayee reshuffles Cabinet

NEW DELHI—Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee put the finishing touches Monday on plans for a reshuffle of his Cabinet that was expected to include a shake-up of the high-profile posts of external affairs and finance.

Indian news media reported that External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh and Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha would likely swap portfolios under the reshuffle, which comes midway through Vajpayee's five-year term and appears intended to strengthen the prime minister's Hindu nationalist party ahead of state elections.

Thirteen new ministers were scheduled to be sworn in Monday evening, and six ministers resigned ahead of the planned reorganization.

Vajpayee has already made one key appointment, naming Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani-a hardline Hindu nationalist-on Saturday to be the new deputy prime minister. **AP**

US-MALAYSIA EXERCISE

REUTERS

US Marines are shown how to prepare smoked monkey by a Malaysian Army officer during their jungle survival training in the Malaysia's Lembing River National Forest. The United States and Malaysia, allies in the international war on terror, ended an eight-day military exercise involving nearly 3,000 of their troops on Sunday. Some 1,400 US servicemen and 1,500 Malaysian troops took part in the eight annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercise on the east coast of Malaysia.

LOVE IN SOUTH SEAS

More than hot nights, dusky maidens

AUCKLAND—Nights are warm and the bodies dusky and hunky, but South Seas sex and love, thanks to Christian missionaries and misguided anthropologists is more than a little confused.

American Margaret Mead and her 1928 best-seller, Coming of Age in Samoa, created an image of highly sexually active Samoan teenage girls, devoid of love and emotion. Some academics have extended this to question whether Polynesians feel sadness or the loss of a loved one.

But what was once viewed as a frivolous subject has, prompted by the looming specter of AIDS and sexual abuse, become a matter for serious debate, prompting the Pacific History Association to plan a much closer look at love and sexuality in Oceania.

For organizer Teresia Teaiwa, a lecturer in Pacific studies at Victoria University, the motivation is stark: Two friends contracted Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

"One of them died last year, and I'm personally convinced that the circumstances which led my friends to contract the disease have much to do with our cultural prohibitions against talking about sex honestly," she said.

"My intimate experience of promiscuity amongst Pacific Islanders, and my reflections on my own irresponsibilities in the past cause me real concern about the rate at which HIV AIDS and other STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) might decimate our populations."

Teaiwa said that when she was teaching at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Fiji she was greatly disturbed at the number of male and female students describing experiences of molestation and sexual abuse.

"I was also incredibly saddened by one student who told me how she had had five abortions since she was 18—she was 21 at the time."

Other statistics, such as increasing incidences of cervical cancer among Pacific women and high maternal morbidity rates in the Solomon Islands, suggest something is amiss. **AFP**

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Rebels burn alive soldier, kill another in Samar town ambush

By Vicente S. Labro
and Cynthia A. Borgueta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Two soldiers, including one who was burned alive, were killed and four others were slightly wounded in an ambush staged by members of the New People's Army on Sunday in Samar.

The soldiers were on board a military truck when it hit a landmine. At least 50 rebels opened fire at the truck on an isolated road between Barangays Concepcion and Lawaan, Paranas town, Samar.

A 20-minute gun battle ensued between the rebels and the soldiers belonging to the Army's 34th Infantry Battalion based in San Jorge town.

Sketchy military reports said one of the soldiers died instantly in the first volley of fire while another one was seriously injured.

Four other soldiers were slightly wounded and were able to escape toward a nearby mountain and take cover.

Capt. Constancio Espina II, information officer of the Army's 8th Infantry Division based in Catbalogan town, said the rebels set on fire the military vehicle with the bodies of two soldiers.

One of those killed was "hacked in the face while the other one, who was just wounded, was believed to have been burned alive with the vehicle," said Espina.

The military, however, did not disclose the identities of the fatalities because their close relatives have yet to be informed about their deaths.

Those wounded were identified as Cpl. Rogelio Trado, Pfc. Melecio Tolibas, Rogelio Tilles, and Pfc. Jose Armigo.

They suffered minor injuries in the feet and arms. They were treated at a military hospital in Catbalogan, the capital town of Samar.

Espina said the ambuscade was perpetrated by rebels belonging to the Dalogdog Platoon under Armando Adelantar alias "Butil" and Naning Laboc alias "Payong."

It was learned that the victims were on their way back to their base in San Jorge town from the interior town of San Jose de Buan, located about 80 kilometers from Catbalogan, where they delivered supplies to an Army detachment there.

The ambush occurred along the 38-kilometer stretch of dirt road connecting the national highway and San Jose de Buan town.

The bodies of the fatalities were recovered from the burned vehicle by a reinforcement team almost two hours after the ambush occurred.

Those who arrived to rescue the victims were policemen from Paranas town, which is about 15 kilometers away, and elements of the 801st Reconnaissance Company based in Barangay Calapi, located some 25 kilometers north of the ambush site.

Some two weeks ago, there were reports here that President Macapagal- Arroyo was to visit San Jose de Buan late June. But the plan did not push through for unknown reasons.

The ambuscade on Sunday occurred just a couple of weeks after military and police intelligence reports revealed that the NPA was set to attack municipal police stations and military detachments in the region before the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections on July 15.

132 villages in S. Mindanao tagged poll 'hot spots'

DAVAO CITY—A total of 132 barangays in Southern Mindanao are considered election flashpoints as most are rebel-infiltrated, according to the military.

Col. Pedro Curva, commanding officer of the 701st Infantry Battalion based in Mawab, Compostela Valley, said he received reports of two barangay chairs in Davao Oriental who were allegedly harassed by the New People's Army to force them to run under a communist-backed party in the coming barangay elections.

Curva said the communist movement would either field their own candidates or support those sympathetic to rebels particularly in areas reportedly "influenced" by the guerrillas.

He cited the case of the incumbent barangay chair of Don Balante in Baganga, Davao Oriental who was reportedly shot and wounded for his refusal to be the "standard bearer" of the local communist movement.

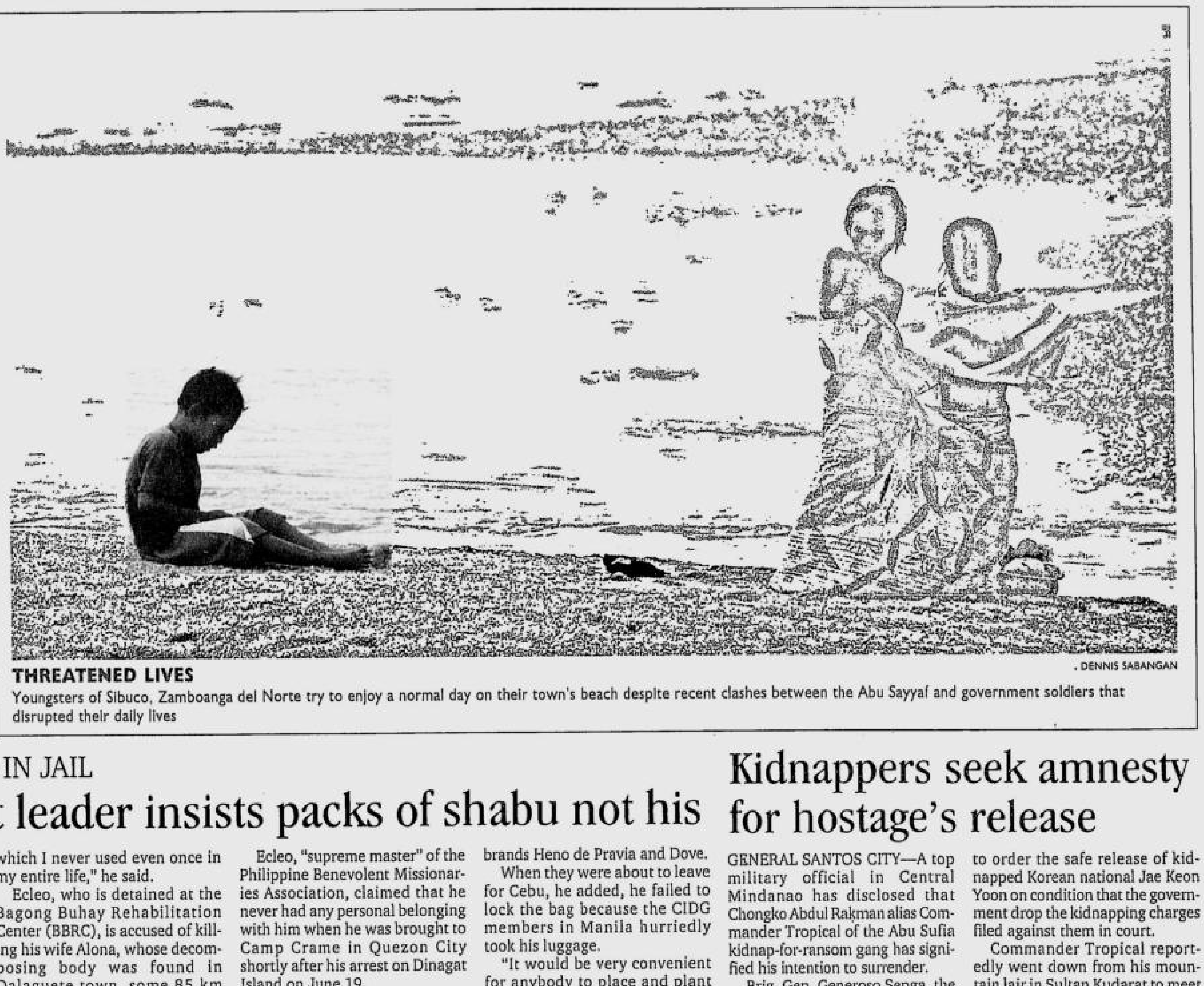
Curva also claimed that the barangay chair of Aliwagwag in Cateel, also in Davao Oriental, had reported to soldiers that he was approached several times by the NPA rebels to be the rebels' candidate.

But despite the incidents, Curva said the military had assured the Commission on Elections that it would do its best to ensure the conduct of honest, orderly and peaceful barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, regional police chief, said the police would monitor the activities of the groups backing the communist rebels.

"We do not want to disrupt the holding of an honest and peaceful elections. We will ensure that they will not use coercion and harassment," Matillano said.

He added that they have already identified hot spot areas, particularly where communist rebels are concentrated such as in Baganga and Cateel in Davao Oriental, Talaingod in Compostela Valley, Bansalan and Kiblawan in Davao del Sur and Paquibato and Marilog districts in Davao City. ***Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***



. DENNIS SABANGAN

THREATENED LIVES
Youngsters of Sibuco, Zamboanga del Norte try to enjoy a normal day on their town's beach despite recent clashes between the Abu Sayyaf and government soldiers that disrupted their daily lives

DRUG SMUGGLING IN JAIL

Detained cult leader insists packs of shabu not his

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Detained cult leader Ruben Ecleo Jr. has asked the Cebu City Prosecutor's Office to dismiss the charges of possession of illegal drugs filed against him, claiming that the packs of shabu found in his luggage at this city's jail were "planted."

He maintained that these packs were intentionally placed in his belongings to aggravate the parricide charges he is now facing at the city's Regional Trial Court.

"I was profoundly shocked and surprised when I learned that my travelling bag contained three heat-sealed sachets of shabu surreptitiously hidden in an Ivory bath soap, a kind of bath soap which I never used even once in my entire life," he said.

Ecleo, who is detained at the Bagong Buhay Rehabilitation Center (BBRC), is accused of killing his wife Alona, whose decomposing body was found in Dalaguete town, some 85 km south of this city.

In his eight-page counter affidavit, Ecleo denied owning the three packs, containing about a gram of shabu each, which were inserted inside a bar of soap.

The drugs were found when jail guards searched his personal belongings inside his luggage after he was committed at the BBRC on June 21.

Jail Officer 1 Aleth Romanillos said in her affidavit that the three packs were concealed inside a half-used Ivory soap.

Ecleo, "supreme master" of the Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association, claimed that he never had any personal belonging with him when he was brought to Camp Crame in Quezon City shortly after his arrest on Dinagat Island on June 19.

Ecleo said his followers in Metro Manila supplied his personal needs such as beddings, towels, t-shirts, pants and short pants, which were placed inside an Everlight Creation travelling bag.

The members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), he added, thoroughly inspected the bag.

But Ecleo insisted that there was no Ivory bath soap among the items because his followers knew that he only used as bath soaps the brands Heno de Pravia and Dove.

When they were about to leave for Cebu, he added, he failed to lock the bag because the CIDG members in Manila hurriedly took his luggage.

"It would be very convenient for anybody to place and plant something inside (the bag to) incriminate me," Ecleo said.

He also pointed out that he was handcuffed during the entire trip to Cebu that the CIDG personnel had to carry his suitcase.

The luggage, he added, was also thoroughly checked during their departure at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and during their arrival at the Mactan Cebu International Airport. It even passed through X-ray machines at both airports, he added.

Kidnappers seek amnesty for hostage's release

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A top military official in Central Mindanao has disclosed that Chongko Abdul Rakman alias Commander Tropical of the Abu Sufia kidnap-for-ransom gang has signified his intention to surrender.

Brig. Gen. Generoso Senga, the newly-installed Army 6th Infantry Division chief, said Commander Tropical recently met with an emissary sent by Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza in an undisclosed place in Palembang, Sultan Kudarat.

Senga was here last week to pay a courtesy call to city officials.

During the meeting with government emissary, Commander Tropical reportedly expressed his willingness to surrender provided he and his group are granted amnesty by the government.

Tropical also reportedly vowed to order the safe release of kidnapped Korean national Jae Keon Yoon on condition that the government drop the kidnapping charges filed against them in court.

Commander Tropical reportedly went down from his mountain lair in Sultan Kudarat to meet with his wife.

"We are very optimistic that this kidnapping incident will be resolved soon," Senga told reporters during a press conference here.

"Hopefully, within this week," Senga added.

On Feb. 6, Yoon and his Filipino friend Carlos Belonio and six other treasure hunters met with Commander Tigre Jakiri of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front 205th Brigade in Barangay Klobe in Palembang allegedly to discuss the purchase of nickel bars. ***Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

MILF man fired for speaking 'on behalf' of Abu

COTABATO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has sacked Uztadz Shariff Moshin Jullabi as its spokesperson for Western Mindanao.

"He was directed to keep his mouth shut and stop talking before the media for and on behalf of the MILF," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu told the INQUIRER.

Despite the MILF Central Committee's directive for Jullabi to stop talking, the self-proclaimed MILF spokesperson for Western Mindanao on Sunday issued a statement that Army Lt. Jessie James Apura was shot by fellow government soldiers in a battle with the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu last week.

Kabalu said the MILF has no business speaking for and on behalf of the Abu Sayyaf.

"That is counter productive since the MILF has no links, in anyway, with the Abu Sayyaf," Kabalu said referring to Jullabi's latest pronouncement.

"He is just a plain MILF member, he has no business speaking for the MILF, specially on matters affecting the government's campaign against the Abu Sayyaf and matters pertaining to the government-MILF peace process," Kabalu said.

He added that only he and MILF political affairs chief Ghazali Jaafar were authorized to speak for the front.

In Zamboanga City, Southern Command spokesperson Lt. Col. Fredesvindo Covarrubias said it seemed that the Abu Sayyaf has a new spokesperson—Julabbi.

Julabbi had claimed that Apura was killed by a government soldier, not by an Abu Sayyaf bandit, as earlier reported by the military.

Yesterday, he challenged the military to prove him wrong and "show Cpl. Arnel Matadling in public and maybe the rest of the Scout Rangers who were wounded in that (June 27) clash."

"They know what really happened, they never encountered Sahiron, they scrambled among themselves and they are now blaming the Abu Sayyaf," Julabbi said.

He said based on the information he gathered from Patikul, Apura was allegedly shot and killed at close range by Matadling, who was earlier reported as missing.

Matadling reportedly went amok after Apura and some of his men allegedly beat him up on June 26.

Meanwhile, Julabbi said he has not received any written order from the MILF central committee stripping him off of his task as spokesperson for Western Mindanao.

"If they don't want me, they could have sent a written order or directly talked to me," he said.

But he admitted that he already wanted to resign from the post in January, but the resignation was rejected by MILF chair Salamat Hashim. ***Julie S. Alipala and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

3 kid brothers die in fire

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Three young brothers were killed after they were trapped in their house, which was hit by fire on Sunday night in Sitio Sampaguita, Barangay Lamac, Consolacion town, 13 kilometers north of this city.

The victims were identified as Jessie, 10; Raymond, 8; and Albert 1, all surnamed Malonja.

The children were left inside the house as their mother, Edna, was in Cebu City to do some laundry. Their father, Firmo, was detained at the Consolacion police station after he was allegedly caught stealing.

[illegible] Intong of the Consolacion fire department said the children were sleeping in their house at about 9:45 p.m. when one of them accidentally knocked down a lighted kerosene lamp.

The fire, that lasted for five minutes, quickly spread to the entire house, which was made of light materials.

Intong said the fire alarm reached his office at about 10 p.m. Firemen arrived at the house too late and saw the children's charred bodies among the debris.

Investigators said Jessie tried to ask help from neighbors when the fire started and returned to the house to try to save his siblings.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Central and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Western sections of Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.
source: pagasa

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	HI32° Lo 24°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 24° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 35° Lo 26°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 25°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/07/02/02

ROUNDUP

Fire guts 2 stores

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Two stores in this city's commercial district were razed on Sunday. Reports said the fire razed the House of Venus and Paramount Store, both general merchandise stores, and destroyed at least P4 million worth of property and merchandise. Firewalls and chemical fire extinguishers used by firemen prevented the fire from razing establishments along Bonifacio Street. The fire was put out after more than an hour. Witnesses said the fire started on the third floor of the House of Venus.

Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Comelec dismisses case

ITOGON, Benguet—The Commission on Elections *en banc* dismissed the case of electioneering lodged against Mayor Mario Godio for lack of evidence and lack of merit. Losing Itogon mayoral candidate Alfonso Fianza filed a complaint with the Benguet election supervisor accusing Godio of violating Section 89 of the Omnibus Election Code banning the giving of food, drinks or things of value to solicit votes. The Comelec decision was based on the findings of lawyer Julius Torres, Benguet election supervisor, that Godio did not violate the election code. Earlier, Judge Nelsonida Ulat-Marrero of the regional trial court here dismissed the criminal and civil complaints against Godio.

Nathan Alcantara, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Anti-PPA drive

MALOLOS, Bulacan—Rep. Wilfrido Villarama is pushing for the distribution of anti-purchased power adjustment (PPA) stickers and flyers to increase awareness on the issue among Bulakeños. The stickers and flyers will be distributed in public places, homes, private and public utility vehicles, he said. Villarama and members of the People Opposed to Warrantless Electric Rates, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, the Bayan-Muna party list group and other cause-oriented groups staged an anti-PPA rally in front of the Meralco plant office in Plaridel last week.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Suspected abductor nabbed

BAGUIO CITY—Police in La Union arrested a man suspected of abducting a three-year-old girl in a restaurant here on June 13. Reports reaching the Baguio police said the La Union police arrested Salvador Fajardo, one of the suspected abductors of Alliah Marie Caasi, in Bauang, La Union, on June 18. Caasi, however, remains missing. Police reports showed that Caasi was seen in La Union after the arrest of Fajardo. Fajardo and a certain Loren, who is still at large, are facing kidnapping charges before the regional trial court here.

Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Army moves vs NPA

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—The Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, in Bataan and Zambales have been either harassing or fielding candidates for the July 15 barangay elections, according to Col. Domingo Tutaan Jr., commander of the Army's 24th Infantry Battalion. This was the reason combat operations have been full-scale in the two provinces since last week, he said. "They're planning to participate in the elections. They're harassing the candidates, extorting money from them or getting their support by fear," Tutaan said.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

'Jewelry City'

MEYCAUAYAN, Bulacan—Gov. Josefina de la Cruz urged jewelers here to continue their production in Bulacan and abandon the idea of building a "Jewelry City" at the Subic freeport. De la Cruz made the call after President Macapagal-Arroyo told her during a meeting of the Regional Development Council in Pampanga that jewelers in Bulacan "don't need to transfer to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA)." Presidential adviser Angelito Sarmiento brought the idea to the President after a group of jewelers here expressed willingness to move to Subic as they find the SBMA offer of tax incentives and security attractive.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Medical mission

LEGAZPI CITY—Some 214 poor residents of Barangay Quitinday, Jovellar, Albay got free medical and dental services through the "Kalahi Karaban," the community service program of the Philippine Army, the local government of Jovellar, the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Regional Development and other government agencies. Col. Pedrito Magsino, commander of the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade based in Daraga, Albay, said the activity was also highlighted by a dialogue between officials of participating agencies and the community to speed up delivery of government services in far-flung areas.

Roly Casim Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Rebel arms seized

CAMP NAKAR, Lucena City—Soldiers encountered at least seven New People's Army rebels in Barangay Kinalabasahan, Bula, Caramines Norte on Sunday, leading to the recovery of several rebel firearms. Maj. Jose Broso, AFP Southern Luzon Command spokesperson, said a team of Army soldiers led by a certain 2Lt. Solosa encountered the rebels while on patrol in the area. After a 10-minute firefight, the rebels withdrew in different directions. No casualty was reported on the government side while the rebels were believed to have suffered an undetermined number of casualties based on traces of blood at the scene of the clash, Broso said. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

LAND REFORM FEUD

GMA, DAR hit for distributing titles

TAGUM CITY—Retrenched workers of the Tagum Agricultural Development Company (Tadeco), owned by the family of Davao del Norte Rep. Antonio Floirendo, vowed to file "gross negligence" charges against President Macapagal-Arroyo for distributing 1,548 hectares of land to 2,513 beneficiaries and farmers here yesterday.

The protesting farm workers claimed that the land still has a pending case before the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council (PARC), which the President chairs.

They also called for the ouster of Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza for failing to advise the President on the status of the case filed by Tadeco, which protested the recommendation of DAR to include the 193 workers retrenched by the banana company.

Evading tight security, some 100 members of the Ugnayan ng Nagsasariling Organisasyon sa Kanayunan (Unorka) occupied the compound of the Provincial Agrarian Reform Office to protest the distribution of Certificates of Land Ownership Award (Cloas) to 3,400 beneficiaries and cooperatives.

The protesters claimed that they were the original beneficiaries.

Eric Cabanit, secretary general of Unorka, said the distribution of Cloas was illegal and immoral.

Steve Quiambao, president of the Peace Foundation, an organization helping agrarian reform beneficiaries, claimed that the distribution of the Cloas was illegal because there was a pending appeal before the Office of the President regarding the land.

He said the President and Braganza were liable for "gross negligence."

"Maybe the President didn't know the real situation," he said.

Former Agrarian Reform Secretary Horacio Morales in January 2001 gave 35 percent of the disputed land to the retrenched workers who were members of the Worldwide Agricultural Corporation (Wadercor) Employees Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association Incorporated (Wearbai). The remaining 65 percent was given to the cooperatives of Tadeco.

The decision was affirmed by Braganza in a ruling released June 2001 ordering the 193 members of Wearbai be included in the list of agrarian reform beneficiaries.

"But this (decision) was appealed by Floirendo at the Office of the President," Quiambao said adding that the case was still being heard.

The President distributed the land titles during yesterday's 35th Araw ng Davao del Norte celebration.

Some 280 Cloas, covering 1,548 hectares and benefiting 2,513 beneficiaries, were given away.

"We can charge the President with gross negligence because of the injustice done," Quiambao said.

But Carlos Munda, corporate communications officer of the Antonio Floirendo Corporation (Anflocor), said the workers already lost in the case according to a Supreme Court decision dated April 3, 2002 related to their retrenchment.

Based on a copy of the SC decision distributed by Anflocor, the High Tribunal had denied the petition of the workers for failing to show that grave abuse of discretion had been committed by the appellate court.

Braganza said he would still check on the protesting workers complaint.

"If their claim is true, then that should be a problem," he said.

Braganza said he could not do anything if the affected workers would file charges. "That is up to them," he said.

Ayan C. Mellejor and Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Farmers picket for CARP

LUPON, Davao Oriental—At least a hundred farmers from Barangay Macangao here and from nearby San Isidro town kept a picket since Monday to press their landlord and the government into recognizing them as tenants.

The farmers said they have been working on the 200-hectare coconut plantation owned by Juanita Lim in Barangay Macangao here, for 30 years already.

They said that would already make them eligible to own the land under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

They accused Lim of trying to circumvent the CARP by refusing to acknowledge them as tenants.

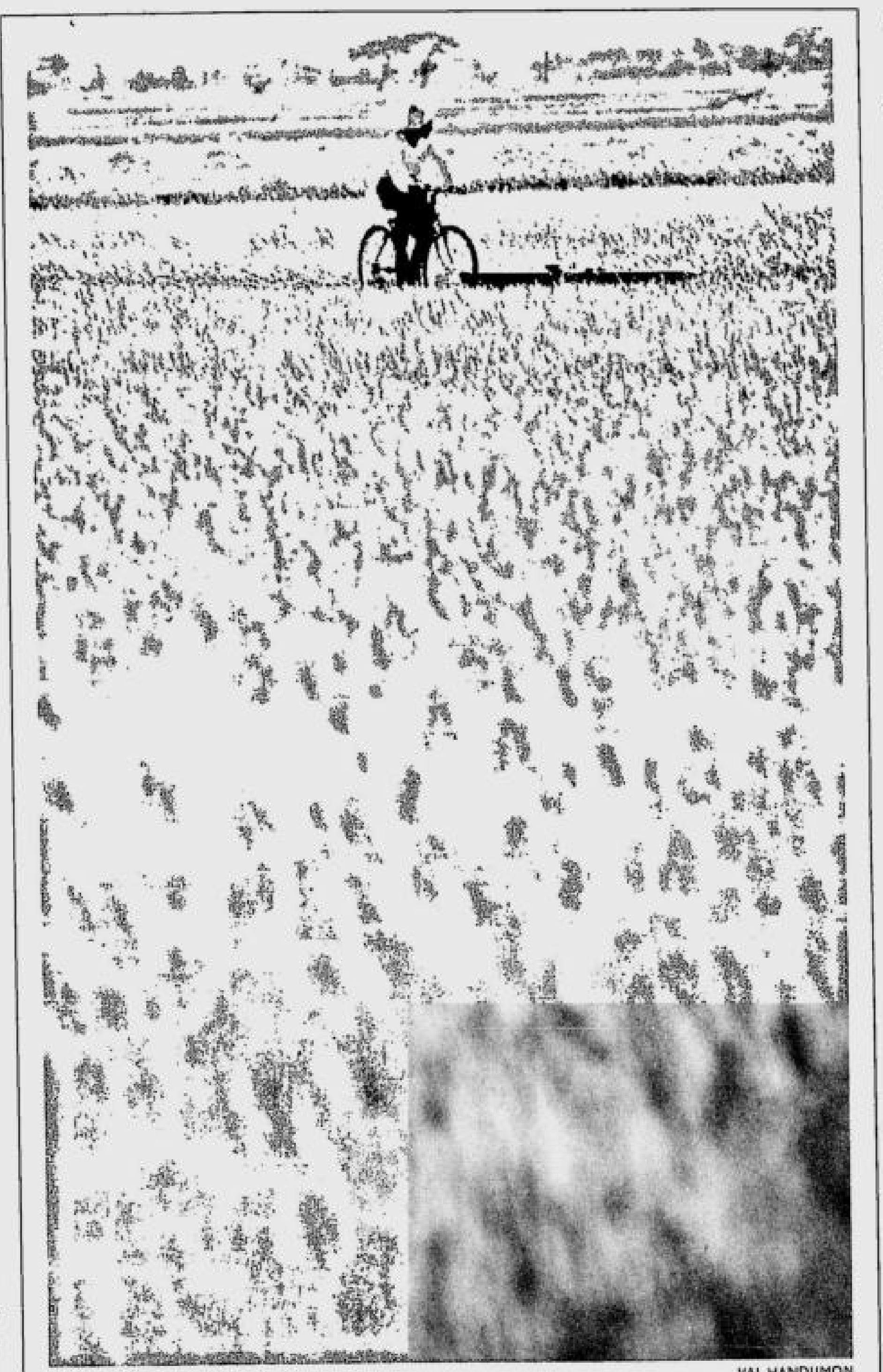
"We want the landowner to recognize us, farmworkers, as tenants so we could avail of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program of the government. It is so unfair for us to be continuously treated as contractual workers despite the fact that we have been working in the hacienda for more than thirty years already," Rudy Mamac, chair of the Nagkahiusang Saop sa Asyenda Lim (United Tenants of Hacienda Lim), said.

Tension rose on Friday afternoon after the protesting workers occupied the compound of the hacienda.

Enrique Duran Jr., Juanita Lim's grandson, urged the farmers to stop their picket because their demand would not be granted.

He said the workers' status would remain contractual because they signed documents to this effect.

"I am so sorry, we could not grant your demand," Duran said. ***Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau***



VAL HANDUMON

FIELD OF DREAMS

A caretaker pedals his way through a farm where rice varieties that would hopefully provide better yield are grown by the Philippine Rice Research Institute in Nueva Ecija.

Hacienda Luisita protesters face raps

By Abner Bolos
PDI Central Luzon Desk

HACIENDA LUISITA, Tarlac City—Leaders of protesting farm workers at the Cojuangco-owned Hacienda Luisita will face the court on July 3 to answer criminal complaints filed by the hacienda management.

Fourteen officers and members of the United Luisita Workers Union (ULWU) were charged with slight physical injuries and malicious mischief on June 11 by Edgar Amar, senior security officer for administration and operations.

The charges stemmed from the daily rallies held by thousands of farm workers in May to protest the reduction of work days implemented by the hacienda management at the end of this year's harvest season.

Amar's complaint was an offshoot of a resolution of the board of directors of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Inc. during its meeting on June 3, according to a certificate issued by corporate secretary Arcadio Lopez.

In a joint sworn statement, security guards Ronald Tua and Ramil Quijano said the workers bearing placards and shouting slogans forcibly entered Gate 2 of the company compound on May 20.

They said the workers failed to breach Gate 1 because company guards had already closed it.

The Asembliya ng Manggagawang Bukid sa Hacienda Luisita (Ang Bala), a farm workers' group at the hacienda, and the Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Tarlac, a provincial chapter of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, condemned the filing of charges as another form of harassment of farm workers.

'Bikini car wash' just tip of sex trade

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The short-lived bikini car wash here, which was closed down in the wake of criticism from women's groups and the Catholic Church, is but surf on the wave of the city's thriving flesh trade.

A report from the Iloilo City Police Office showed that women in bikinis and men in thongs are regular features in some of the 120 registered and unregistered nightspots all over Iloilo City.

These joints are part of the city's landscape that, during the Visayas-wide convention of vice mayors in June, a directory of these bars was distributed along with the city's historical attractions and seafood restaurants.

The convention delegates were even asked to present their identification cards to avail of discounts.

In the Regional Peace and Order Council meeting in April, the proliferation of nightspots in the city and province of Iloilo was on the agenda.

Gov. Niel Tupas urged town and city mayors to regulate the presence of such establishments, which had become a health and a police problem.

More sex workers

A police report, which was submitted last year to the city's task force against lewd shows and prostitution, noted an increase in the number of commercial sex workers (CSWs) here following the proliferation of beer houses, clubs, massage parlors and karaoke bars.

The report said these places "can and have become fronts for prostitution." The report did not indicate the exact number of entertainers and sex workers in the city and province.

The Kabalaka Reproductive Health Center last year surveyed 300 commercial sex workers as part of its sexually transmitted diseases and Human Immuno-deficiency Syndrome (HIV) and Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) prevention programs.

The Kabalaka is a non-government organization based at the Central Philippines University here.

The NGO said many sex workers, mostly men, were not included in the study because they could not be interviewed for being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Most of them could not be located for interviews.

The city police report showed many women fall prey to the sex trade in the course of looking for jobs. They were recruited to work as salesgirls in malls but ended up working as bar girls instead.

Some nightclubs, employing unlicensed Guest Relations Officers (GROs), forced women to strip off their bikinis to attract male customers.

The female and male entertainers earned their keep from tips and bar fines. But the police report also noted the practice of "free sex," also known as "Bato-Baylo-Banga," where young women had sex in exchange for drugs like shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride).

Rebels vow to hunt comrades in robbery-killings

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) has assured the police in Negros Oriental that they have not given up the search for their two renegade members who were accused of robbing and killing four municipal employees.

Senior Supt. Drusillo Bolodo, police provincial director, said the RPA-ABB leaders assured them that they were hunting down their members known only as Ka Drilon and Jaime Amaro.

"The RPA said they would capture Ka Drilon dead or alive," Bolodo said.

Ka Drilon and Amaro are wanted for robbing and killing four employees of Sta. Catalina town, Negros Oriental on May 8 in Bayawan City, some 92 kilometers south of here.

The victims were returning to Sta. Catalina after withdrawing some P372,000 in payroll money from the Land Bank of the Philippines branch in Bayawan City.

Their vehicle was traversing the national highway along Barangay Maninihon in Bayawan when two men in fatigues and carrying long firearms stopped them. Bayawan is about 20 kilometers from Sta. Catalina.

Reports said the victims were then divested of the payroll money before they were shot. The suspects fled on two motorcycles, one of which was a black Honda TMX 155, in the direction of Mabinay town.

The victims were identified as municipal paymaster Librado Dagat; Serafin Dinsay, driver of the town's L-300 van; Winnie Yorong, an employee of the municipal treasurer's office, and Virgie Edreal, a government midwife who was just hitching a ride in the municipal van.

Ka Drilon and Amaro were identified after the NBI released sketches of the suspects and after Amaro's brother, Jaime, surrendered to police and revealed everything he knew about the robbery-killings.

Jaime was the third person who took part in the holdup by driving the motorcycle, which was used as getaway vehicle of the two suspects.

Ka Drilon was recently sighted in the mountains of Negros Oriental, indicating that he had not left the province since the crime was committed.

"It seems that he has already spent all the money robbed from the Sta. Catalina payroll," Bolodo said.

The police hunt for Ka Drilon was focused on the province's coastal areas while the RPA-ABB hunt was concentrated on the mountains

Rift threatening Lakas unity, members warn

From page A1

the President and the Vice President."

He told reporters in a chance interview at the Department of Foreign Affairs that he was withholding further comment on his planned resignation before July 22, which he disclosed to the INQUIRER in an exclusive interview Saturday.

The Vice President also denied that a meeting of supporters and political leaders was held at his residence in New Manila on Sunday.

Intrigues

In Malacañang, Gabriel Claudio, Ms Macapagal's adviser for legislative affairs, appealed to the Lakas members "not to be swayed by intrigues" supposedly being sown by party insiders whom he did not name.

"These are just intrigues. These are not from responsible and legitimate elements of the party," said Claudio, Lakas deputy secretary general, in a phone interview.

He challenged these insiders to "at least come out in the open and identify themselves."

Claudio said it was "foolish" to claim that there was disenchantment with the President because of last week's botched handling of Guingona's then supposed resignation and her poor showing in a recent poll survey.

"Both cases are transient in nature," he said.

He also bristled at suggestions that certain party stalwarts had started looking for "potential alternatives" to Ms Macapagal as the Lakas standard bearer in the 2004 elections.

There had been talk that unless the President got her act together, the party might turn to other potential bets like Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

Party insiders have claimed that murmurs of disappointment were being heard in Lakas because of the Palace's "shabby" treatment of Guingona.

They said Lakas was wary of going through another debacle like that in 1998 when its presidential candidate, De Venecia, got a trouncing at the polls.

Survey results show that Ms Macapagal's approval rating had plunged from 16 percent to 4 percent.

But Claudio said there was "no reason to look for alternatives" to her. "I have to say this even though I feel awkward since the President prefers that her political plans not be discussed," he said.

In a prepared statement, Claudio said "Lakas members will always support the President's policies and actions."

"They will at least give her the benefit of the doubt, knowing that (she) is both a wise executive and a compassionate leader," he said. "They know that (she) continues to hold Vice President Guingona in high esteem and would never treat him shabbily even as they try to settle the (DFA) issue between themselves."

Claudio also sought to assure Lakas members of the President's fidelity to Lakas despite the reactivation of Kampi.

"They have no cause to believe the intrigue that she will join or rely on another party," he said.

Frayed nerves

Jose Rufino, the President's adviser on political affairs and Lakas national executive director, said the Guingona issue had "disturbed" party members.

"The whole weekend, I did nothing but explain," Rufino said, adding that he assured Lakas members that things were back to normal between Ms Macapagal and Guingona.

"There might have been some nerves frayed, but I think it's all over now," he said.

But Claudio said Lakas members understood that the situation was "a temporary and transient inconvenience, probably an awkward situation, but certainly not beyond repair."

"If there was confusion in the announcement of the supposed acceptance of (Guingona's) resignation, I don't think there was (any) intention to cause any harm or embarrassment to anybody," he said. "Lakas members see that. The President has done nothing to offend the sensibilities of Lakas members."

Rufino and Claudio agree that a "loyalty check" is unnecessary "because the party is solid," Rufino said. "I'm sure even the Vice President is very supportive of the President."

Claudio said the President still enjoyed the full support of Lakas, and vice versa.

But a Lakas official close to former President Fidel Ramos warned that Guingona would not go without a fight.

"He has agreed to resign but he will make it hard for the President," said the official, who asked not to be named. "He'll force the President to fire him so he would be a rebel with a cause."

Should Guingona be dismissed from the Cabinet, he might "spill the beans" against the administration, the official said, adding:

"He can really give her a lot of problems."

The official also said the rift would split Lakas between the "newcomers," including the President, and the "originals" led by Guingona and Ramos, the party's titular head.

He said Ramos was expected to side with Guingona on this rift.

But Gonzalez did not buy the scenario of Guingona going after the President.

He said the Balikatan military exercise and the presence of US troops in the country would be a "weak issue" for Guingona to raise against the President.

Mending fences

Gunigundo also called for a Lakas meeting to help mend fences between the two top officials.

"She should convene the national directorate to explain her position and for the Vice President to also air his side," Gunigundo said.

The congressman protested Malacañang's treatment of Guingona. "The relationship between the President and the Vice President must be redefined and reshaped," he said. "We should give the Vice President a more expanded role in the administration."

But Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama defended the President's apparent wish to sack Guingona.

Villarama, who once served as chief of staff to Ms Macapagal, said Guingona was "too principled for an executive official."

"Once you are a member of the Cabinet, you have to defer to the President," he said. "If (Guingona) is being shabbily treated, it is because he has been combative toward the President's policies."

Villarama added that "if you cannot follow the President wholeheartedly, then (resignation) is the most decent thing to do."

Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri said the two top officials should "kiss and make up."

"I liken this situation to a married couple who have a little *tampuhan* because of miscommunication and intrigues," he said. "My partymates are solidly behind the leadership of the President. But we would also like to support our party president, so mediation is called for."

Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran expressed support for Guingona and said he should not allow himself to be bullied by the President.

Beltran said that even if Guingona resigned from the DFA, he should continue to assert his opposition to the Balikatan and the expanding US military presence.

Negros Occidental Rep. Jun Lozada, Lakas vice president, said a party caucus should be convened to thresh out the issue.

He warned that reports on the rift between the two officials could adversely affect the confidence of local and foreign investors.

Davao Rep. Prospero Nograles appealed to Guingona not to rock the boat. "Let's keep our party solid. Let's keep our party differences internal," he said.

Deputy Minority Leader Rolex Suplico, a member of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, said Guingona was distancing himself and the party from Ms Macapagal because of her plummeting ratings.

"Being one of the founders of Lakas, the Vice President simply wants to protect the interest of his party. (The President) is bringing not only herself but also the entire Lakas down," Suplico said in a statement.

He said "some Lakas members" were "not really happy with what's happening" under the administration.

"They are very cautious, however, because she is still the President and many of their projects are still pending her approval and funding," he added.

Disaster

Administration Sen. Joker Arroyo said Malacañang's handling of the Guingona issue was "an unmitigated disaster."

Arroyo said in a statement that acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable "talks too much and without restraint," and that it would serve the President well to censure him.

"Otherwise, it will look as if she encouraged, or at least countenanced, his statements" on Guingona's supposed resignation as foreign secretary, Arroyo said.

The senator noted that while Cabinet members served at the President's pleasure, "when policy differences occur and the department secretary has perforce to leave, the matter must be handled with circumspection and civility."

"This is how it is done at all levels of officialdom, especially on matters not involving corruption," he said.

Another administration senator, Renato Cayetano, maintained that Lakas was solidly behind the President.

"We had a meeting over the weekend and we all agreed that it is within the President's prerogative to revamp her Cabinet," Cayetano said. ***With reports from Norman Bordadora, Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Rocky Nazareno***

Sikatuna group blamed

From page A1

and foreign ambassadors reportedly meet—fed the President intrigues that led to Malacañang's premature announcement on Thursday of Guingona's resignation.

The INQUIRER phoned Romulo's office for comment and was told by his secretary that he was abroad. Romulo, now the President's adviser on international competitiveness, had earlier denied to the INQUIRER that he was meddling in the DFA.

The ABS-CBN News Channel yesterday quoted acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable as saying that communication lines between the President and Guingona remained open despite the fiasco of June 27.

The ANC said Afable told the network in an interview that Guingona would resign as foreign secretary within three weeks or before the President delivers her State of the Nation address on July 22.

Guingona told the INQUIRER as much in an exclusive interview last Saturday.

But Capco, who initially refused to comment on the issue, said Guingona was not resigning.

"It is improper to even react or think of a replacement," he said. "The important thing is that the issue has been resolved."

In a teleconference with Palace reporters on Sunday, Afable said the President would accept Guingona's resignation as DFA chief as soon as the latter decided it was time for him to go.

As of 4 p.m. yesterday, Afable had yet to conduct his regular daily press briefing.

Correct suspicion

Gonzalez said Guingona was correct in voicing suspicion that certain "forces" wanted him out of the DFA.

The congressman noted reports that Romulo's group had tipped the President that Guingona would highlight his differences with the administration's policy on the US military presence in his speech Thursday night at the Manila Overseas Press Club.

Hours before Guingona appeared at the MOPC, Afable released copies of the President's letter accepting Guingona's resignation.

Guingona denied this. He met with the President in Malacañang and when he came out, it was announced that the letter was a mistake.

Gonzalez also noted reports that Romulo had told the President that the visit of US Secretary of State Colin Powell might be delayed if Guingona remained in the DFA.

"If you put these things together, it would appear that both the President and Guingona are victims of certain people with vested interests," Gonzalez said.

He said that for as long as Romulo was allowed to meddle, "there will always be intrigues against whoever is appointed DFA (chief)."

"Romulo has not outlived his desire to be (foreign) secretary. I disagree that just because he is a Romulo, he is the best for the department. Romulo is not Carlos P. Romulo," Gonzalez said, referring to Roberto Romulo's eminent father.

Gonzalez said there had been signals that the Americans were not pleased with Guingona starting from his vote against the retention of the US bases to his opposition to the Balikatan.

"This is unfair to Guingona because he toed the line of the Balikatan," Gonzalez said.

He added that Guingona was not anti-American but pro-Filipino.

Jose Rufino, the President's adviser on political affairs, conceded that some Palace officials had treated Guingona shabbily, but insisted that Ms Macapagal was not to blame.

"She would never do that," said Rufino, who is also national executive director of Lakas.

Asked if he agreed with Guingona's claim there were "forces" in Malacañang who wanted him out of the DFA, Rufino replied: "I don't want to go that far."

But he expressed doubt that the President "accepted" Guingona's resignation as foreign secretary, as Afable announced last Thursday.

Rufino said any investigation would only lead to a "witchhunt" that would not solve anything.

Afable distributed copies of the President's letter accepting Guingona's resignation around 2 p.m. of June 27.

Around that time, Rufino said, the President instructed him to inform Guingona to represent her at a Fil-American gathering in the United States in August.

Rufino said he relayed the instruction to Guingona, who gladly accepted it.

"At first I thought it was *kuryente* (a bum steer), that the letter was fake because it didn't have a barcode," which is standard operating procedure for all communications from the Office of the President, Rufino said.

"And I'm sure the President won't (make) that drastic a move to the Vice President," he said.

Rufino, however, noted that the President's signature appeared genuine.

He reiterated his suspicion that the opposition had a hand in the mess. He said some loyalists of ousted President Joseph Estrada could have stayed behind at the Palace.

"Who would benefit from this?" he said.

Afable had taken the blame for the "mistake," saying the letter was released by the Office of the Executive Secretary. ***With a report from Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

RP, US agree . . .

From page A1

the exercises "more geographically spread out, unlike this Balikatan, which, upon my request had been concentrated in Basilan."

Cimatu attended the MDB's annual meeting last week in Honolulu, Hawaii. He is board co-chair, together with Adm. Thomas Fargo, chief of the US Pacific Command.

Cimatu told reporters that in the new Balikatan exercise, US troops would stay in the country but in reduced numbers.

"The same forces but they might be reduced . . . Some will be in Visayas, some will be in Mindanao and some will be in Luzon," he said.

He clarified that the new exercise was not part of the controversial Military Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA), as this was purely a "training exercise."

But the AFP chief quickly said everything was "not yet final and . . . will still be subject for discussion" on Thursday, when US defense and military officials are expected to arrive to discuss the next joint military exercise.

"There will be some Special Forces (units), equipment will also be brought and US helicopters will also be available. But there are no specific details yet," Cimatu said.

"There will still be consultation with the people of Mindanao . . . their opinion will be given consideration," he said.

Cimatu provided media with copies of the MDB's joint statement.

"The members . . . agreed that the strength of the alliance is reflected in the ability of the Mutual Defense Treaty to adapt to a changing security environment characterized by transnational threats such as terrorism," the statement read.

"The members reiterated the battle against Abu Sayyaf terrorists was the AFP's fight and that the role of US forces is to train, advise and assist," it added.

"The members also noted the joint Philippine, US military engineering projects on Basilan were progressing satisfactorily. The work focuses on infrastructure improvements which will improve the AFP's effectiveness while also increasing the prospects for economic development and elimination of poverty," the joint statement said.

The allies also agreed on a 2003 schedule of activities that include "combined military exercises, exercise-related construction activities, personnel exchange and ship visits, security assistance activities, conferences, workshops and symposiums" as well as civic action projects. ***With a report from AFP***

From spy dolphins to therapists

From page A1

recruits.

Once they guarded the communist empire's most strategic bay in Sevastopol, plunging into cold, deep waters to monitor mines and watch for enemy frogmen creeping closer to the Soviet Union's prestigious Black Sea Fleet.

More than 10 years on, the fleet is either rusting in dock or being destroyed, the threat of intruders has all but disappeared and the Soviet Union no longer exists.

But Vakh and Diana, Black Sea dolphins, are still in work—now using their highly trained minds to help cure children with problems from nightmares to bedwetting, autism to cerebral palsy.

And the former military dolphins have proved a big hit.

Galina Stepanova has traveled from near Russia's Urals mountain range to the medical center in Ukraine's southern Crimea with her son Misha who has cerebral palsy.

"This is only his second time swimming with the dolphins and . . . It is an emotional response at the moment and he likes it very much," she said, as a shivering Misha nursed a cup of tea after his swim in the Black Sea.

Surrounded by huge ships in a small bay once closed off from the rest of Ukraine, the former top-secret military base No. 99727 has become a leading place for dolphin-therapy—a controversial alternative technique to soothe certain ailments.

Each session costs $20 for Ukrainians and those from other former Soviet states. Other foreigners pay $50.

Over-subscribed and in need of a lick of paint or two, the center still bears the stamp of naval authority—all the administrators are naval officers.

"Earlier, we researched their physiologies and their strength to help the Soviet Union's Black Sea Fleet. They used to be trained to look for sunken objects and defend the entrance to the bay," Lyudmila Lukina, head of science at the oceanarium, says in a small office on wooden walkways above the choppy sea.

"But 10 years ago, when it all went wrong we had to find a way to survive. We were no longer of any use to anyone. And we had to think what to do to save our dolphins."

After reading a magazine, the therapy idea was born—one that the women who work with the dolphins felt was much more suitable for their "children."

Olga Smirnova says that in the old days, her dolphin, Diana, was never sent on "nasty" missions and just looked for things. The explanation stops there.

"Diana is a kind animal, she went on peaceful missions . . . she was trained to search for things, now she is specially trained to play with children, which she enjoys," a beaming Smirnova says of Diana, her charge for 24 years.

"They are like our children, we would never have sent them out strapped with bombs or something like that."

Specialists at the center dismiss as myth the notion held by some that the dolphins are used to kill. They say the creatures—which can live as long as 50 years in the wild—are mostly used to locate underwater mines and detect frogmen, relaying the information with signals. ***Reuters***

PUP to modify test for blind scholars

From page A1

school was not completely closing its doors on the students but merely needed more time to prepare an entrance examination adapted for the visually impaired.

Sammy Salvador, vice president for academic affairs, said the school got in touch with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to ask its psychologists for help in preparing the modified entrance test.

Salvador said the needed changes had to do with the "abstract reasoning" part of the test, because blind students could not answer questions that required visual analysis.

"This will be the very first experience of the university in dealing with blind students. We have to be very much prepared," Moises Garcia, vice president for student services, said.

For Sen. Renato Cayetano, however, the original refusal was reason enough to invoke the 1992 Magna Carta for Disabled Persons.

Cayetano, chair of the Senate committee on education, arts and culture, urged the Commission on Higher Education to "direct PUP officials to ensure the enrolment of the seven college students seeking accommodation but were denied entry because they were blind."

"The law clearly states that disabled persons are part of Philippine society," he said.

The National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons also backed the bid of the seven blind scholars—namely, Aldeline Versoza, 18; Rene Albao, 24; Andrea Adremesin, 19; Jessel Rivera; Bienalyn Villanueva; Charina Zuniga; and Joel Rescobar, 18—to be admitted to the PUP.

It scored the university administration for discriminatory acts against "persons with disabilities" (or PWDs).

"It's discrimination to deny PWDs education on account of their disabilities," said Mateo Lee Jr., NCWDP executive director, who is himself totally blind.

Misinterpretation?

Garcia denied that he had told Ernesto Lucio, acting president of the Philippine Blind Union and a DSWD officer, that the students could not study in PUP.

He said his statements could have been misinterpreted. He recalled that Lucio, who represents the students, had threatened to sue the PUP if the school would not accept the scholars.

This outburst did not sit well with him, Garcia said.

Salvador said PUP President Ofelia Carague was currently in New York, but emphasized that she could not have rejected the students outright.

"This was just our first time to encounter this. We have students with disabilities, but never have we encountered blind students before. Our guidance office needed to be prepared," he said.

"We were just waiting for the psychologists from the DSWD," he added.

If the seven pass the test, they can still study in PUP, he said. "*Puede pa silang humabol* (They can still catch up)."

He said that PUP was also waiting for Lucio to fulfill his promise of providing synthesizers for the computers that would be used by the blind students.

But Lucio said he and the students were in fact given the runaround by PUP officials, and in late May were told categorically that the school would not accept blind students.

Lucio said the school was using delaying tactics so the students will get tired of following up their application for entrance tests.

For one thing, he said, the PUP officials have not been properly coordinating with each other. For another, some PUP staff members told them there was no instruction from the PUP officials to entertain the scholars.

"Service delayed is service denied," Lucio said.

Lack of understanding

The students themselves said that they could not understand why the PUP did not want to accept them.

Rescobar said he hoped the university would reconsider its decision.

In his statement, Cayetano said it was "imperative that all academic institutions should provide equal opportunities for the disabled persons."

He said this should be implemented especially by state-owned universities and colleges. "(SUCs) should, in fact, be more lenient on this as compared to private academic institutions. Their funds, after all, are paid for by the people," Cayetano said.

The Magna Carta for Disabled Persons, Republic Act 7277, states that it shall be unlawful for any institution to deny a disabled person admission to any course it offers by reason of the student's handicap or disability.

"If their reason is the lack of facilities for the education of the blind, that is also not acceptable," Lee said.

In two weeks, starting on July 17, the country will observe National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week. ***With a report from Gerald Lacuarta***

Too many 'A-yers' in PNP, not enough books

From page A1

compared it with the grass at the site. They matched."

A successful case like this, however, seems more the exception rather than the rule. Reyes says he knows why. In the initial phase of a criminal investigation, "the most important portion" is not always performed properly.

From the start, Reyes says, a forensic expert should be present at every crime scene investigation. "This is not the case here," he says, drolly. The NBI itself has only 39 full-time medico-legal officers deployed throughout the country.

Bu Castro, head of the Philippine Association of Forensic Medicine (PAFM), says only "about 50 or so" doctors in the country can be considered forensic experts. Many of them have had training abroad.

Aside from the lack of manpower, lack of training, especially among Philippine National Police (PNP) investigators, is also a major cause of mishandled or inadequately investigated cases.

One root cause of the problem, says Dr. Antonio Rebosa of the PAFM, is that the PNP is run by graduates of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA)—a legacy of the time the national police was integrated into the military service.

But the PMA alumni, or "A-yers" as they are popularly known, were trained for combat and intelligence gathering, not police work, Rebosa says during a group interview that includes doctors Castro, forensic odontologist Eduardo Balatbat, Dario Gajardo, Bienvenido Torres and Ernesto Jimenez, president of the Philippine Public Safety College.

PMA graduates have little or no training in crime investigation, Rebosa says.

PNP Director Lucas Managuelod does not specifically cite PMA alumni, but in the main, he agrees. He says policemen generally have not yet learned to appreciate forensic evidence, such as a strand of hair or a patch of skin left behind at a crime scene.

This is because policemen still possess a military mindset, says Managuelod, chief of the PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management. "The military has a different culture. Its job is to meet external aggression, to search and destroy the enemy, to kill. The policeman's job is to serve and protect the people, even the lives of their enemies, the criminals."

Lack of equipment

There is also the matter of inadequate equipment, perhaps the most common complaint bedeviling police investigations in the country.

"We want to modernize our laboratory and exhaust our knowledge," Reyes says of the state of affairs at the NBI, the country's premier investigative agency patterned after the US Federal Bureau of Investigation. But lack of equipment forces his staff "to improvise," he says.

On a much bigger scale, the PNP also makes do with the little that is there.

Last year, the PNP budget for the purchase of new investigation equipment was a skimpy P45 million, barely enough to meet the need.

Records from the Office of the Directorate for Logistics show that the percentage fill-up (that is, what the PNP has on hand) of key equipment fell below 50 percent—in some categories, way below.

For example, police security lines, the yellow line used to demarcate a crime scene, have a percentage fill-up of 19.79 percent, meaning that for every five units of security line the PNP needs, only one is available.

Seven out of every 10 investigation kits, one out of every two cameras, and three out of every five fingerprint kits required are also unavailable.

Reyes says his own wish list of new equipment for the NBI includes a colposcope, which would give a "panoramic view of the female genitalia" of rape victims.

He also wants an infrared apparatus that can detect the presence of blood stains; a U-caliper for hymen measurement; portable X-rays. And books, books, books on forensic medicine.

He says the NBI now operates a DNA analyzer that is better than the one at the University of the Philippines. It helped identify the victims of the plane crash in the Island Garden City of Samal, he adds. (He notes, however, that the families of the victims had to pay for the expensive reagents used. DNA analysis cost as much as P15,000.)

Expert disagreement

But experts in forensic medicine do not always agree with one another.

One expert, who was present at the autopsy of former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., assassinated on Aug. 21, 1983, believes Rolando Galman—the hired gun the Marcos regime immediately tagged as the opposition leader's killer—was the real gunman.

Slide by slide, he shows his medical students why, though his opinion runs counter to the public consensus that Galman had merely taken the fall for someone else.

Or take the case of Navy Ensign Phillip Pestaño, who was found dead in his cabin. Military investigators ruled it a suicide, but Rebosa, whose services were retained in the case, maintains to this day that it was murder.

He says those who discovered Pestaño's body should have left everything untouched until the investigators arrived. Either they did not know any better, he says, or they deliberately altered the scene.

How are conflicting interpretations resolved?

"It's not a popularity thing," says UP forensic pathologist Raquel Fortun. "You're after the truth, the objective analysis of fact."

She says the state of forensic investigation in the country has improved somewhat in the last few years, but in general the outlook is not bright. "Backward in all aspects, even legislation. Lagging behind as far as new methods are concerned," Fortun says.

Like all forensic pathologists, Fortun points out that the law provides for all victims of violence and unexplained deaths to undergo an autopsy.

"But here," she says, "when an unidentified body is found, most policemen would (first) call the funeral parlor. There is no attempt to first establish the identity. The funeral parlor then hopes someone will turn up to claim the body. It's motivated by profit."

She is also frustrated that, here, adult consent has to be sought before an autopsy can be performed on children who die under mysterious circumstances.

If forensic pathologists are not given consent, Fortun argues, how does one find out whether these adults—parents, guardians, caregivers—are themselves guilty or not?

Forensic medicine

In "Forensic Medicine: Facts the Public Must Know" (UST Publishing), the founding president of the PAFM, Dr. Teresita Sanchez, who is also a lawyer, makes a fine distinction between legal medicine and forensic medicine.

Legal medicine is the application of medicine to legal cases. This would, for example, include issues about the doctor-patient relationship.

Forensic medicine is the application of medical science to solve legal problems. "Did Galman kill Ninoy?" is a question forensic medicine can help answer.

Forensic medicine deals with "investigation, preparation, preservation and presentation of evidence and medical opinion in courts and other legal, correctional and law-enforcement settings."

Medico-legal work refers to the handling of cases that involve legal duties connected with any aspect of health care.

Several PAFM members are pushing for the creation of an independent body—that is, not under the PNP or the NBI—to be composed of experts in forensic medicine to help handle medico-legal cases.

Fortun, who is a member of the Philippine Society of Pathologists, has something different in mind. She is lobbying for a forensic science institute within the UP system.

A bill to this effect has already been filed by Tarlac Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, she says, and the idea has already been approved on first pass by the UP Board of Regents.

"This will not take over the work of the PNP and the NBI," she explains. "It will fill the gap."

With a report from John Nery

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School for probers

From page A1

"The investigative capability of our policemen is dismal. Many do not know how to investigate, even officers. They are not as competent as they should be," Managuelod says.

He says the PNP has about 15,000 investigators, most of them ill trained. The obvious problem: the PNP does not have an investigation school since its founding 11 years ago.

"What we have is a two-room investigation school, which is very small and does not even have enough budget," Managuelod says.

The two rooms, housed inside Camp Crame, can accommodate up to only 50 students at one time. Here, students are taught courses such as scene of the crime operations, evidence gathering and the taking of testimonies.

But the school's space and location limit its potential. And although the PNP has a mobile training unit, which teaches investigative skills in the regions, this and the DIDM facility cannot meet the PNP's current needs.

To deal with the problem, the PNP will begin constructing this year a P280-million investigation school inside the 22-hectare Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan, Taguig, according to Managuelod.

The complex will be called the PNP Criminal Investigation Training Institute (PNP-Citi).

Managuelod says the Citi has been a constant dream for many police officials. "It will be a world-class facility, housing a crime village. Criminal investigation courses will be offered at the Citi, including traffic and narcotics investigation, and other specialized courses," he said.

Courses on cyber or computer crimes and money laundering will also be offered.

Managuelod says a "crime village" will feature make-believe banks, nightclubs, and other possible crime scenes. Here, students will be trained to reconstruct the scene of a mock robbery or stage a mock raid. It will also include a "police station" where "witnesses' testimonies will be taken."

A "courtroom" will also be constructed, so investigators will "know how to appear in courts."

The teachers will come mostly from within the police organization, especially those who had been sent to the United States and other developed countries for investigative training. Foreign teachers will also be hired, preferably from the FBI, Managuelod says.

"We are holding informal talks with the FBI and other US law enforcement agencies to help us in the formulation of the school's curriculum. They will also be sending teachers. That will be cheaper, compared to us sending our students there," he says.

Not scientific

Managuelod says many PNP investigators are not "scientific investigators."

"We're not there yet. Some of us employ scientific investigation, but these are very few," he says.

A perennial problem among investigators, according to Managuelod, is that they rely too much on testimonial rather than on physical evidence.

"Testimonial evidence is needed, but it should not be the main evidence. A statement could be changed and recanted. Some even lie. Most of the time, statements are unreliable," he says.

In the ranking of evidence, a testimony comes second to physical or forensic evidence; circumstantial evidence comes third.

Scientific investigation also lessens the probability of human rights violations.

"You combine physical, testimonial and circumstantial evidence, in that order, then you have scientific investigation. If a detective knows this, he will avoid human rights violation," Managuelod says.

"What happens is that if a policeman relies solely on a statement, and when he can not get one but he has a suspect, you know what happens," he says, suggesting the use of torture and extra-judicial means to get a confession.

"The mission of the PNP is to investigate crimes, prosecute the criminals and see to it that they are convicted in the courts. But how do we investigate? We don't have the school, the training, the knowledge," he says.

DOJ orders

The DIDM often receives orders from the Department of Justice to reinvestigate a case.

"We are offering refresher courses on rules on evidence for the (people from) the CIDG (Criminal Investigation and Detection Group) so they will know which evidence to offer in courts, what we call evidence with probative value," Managuelod says.

"What we (usually) have here (are investigators) submitting evidence with no probative value, evidence not needed," he says.

Recognizing the problem, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines has regularly offered several courses on court evidence and evidence presentation.

Last January, the DIDM issued a directive to all investigation units on the treatment of confessed criminals, apparently in an effort to correct the fiasco brought about by Philip Medel's dramatic recantation in the still unsolved Nida Blanca case.

Rule 1 of the directive, for example, reads: "As a general rule, an extra judicial confession is admissible against the confessant only. It is incompetent evidence against his co-accused for being hearsay."

The DIDM is likewise revising the investigation manual it had printed years ago.

"There are new crimes that have not been stipulated in the old manual," Managuelod says. "These include, among others, cyber crimes and money laundering."

"We hope if we are able to do all these, the skills of our investigators will be enhanced. We may be counting years perhaps but at least we have begun the foundations," Managuelod says.

Samba drums get Brazil party going

RONALDO and his Brazil teammates hoist the World Cup trophy after their 2-0 victory over Germany. AFP

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil–The sounds of car horns, plastic trumpets and fireworks filled the air Sunday as Brazil celebrated an unprecedented fifth World Cup title.

Samba drums set thousands of beach-goers dancing in their bathing suits and yellow Brazil jerseys before a giant-screen TV set up on Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach.

It hardly mattered that the sun bleached the screen, making it hard to follow the game.

Tears smudged the green and yellow paint on the faces of teen-agers and strangers hugged each other amid cries of "Brazil! Brazil!" and "Five-time champion!"

"I'm so happy, it was difficult for the first half, but now I'm going to party all week. I hope they declare tomorrow a holiday," 15-year-old Monica Maia said. Nearby, her family jumped up and down waving Brazilian flags.

President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who watched the game in Brasilia, the nation's capital, issued a statement praising the team's success.

"The tears of Ronaldo, of Big Phil and the other players in the moment of the final whistle are the tears of emotion and joy of all the Brazilian people," the statement read. "You have shown, with talent, character and team spirit, that our soccer continues to be the best in the world."

Across the nation, from the Pampas to the Amazon rainforest, fans could barely contain their joy.

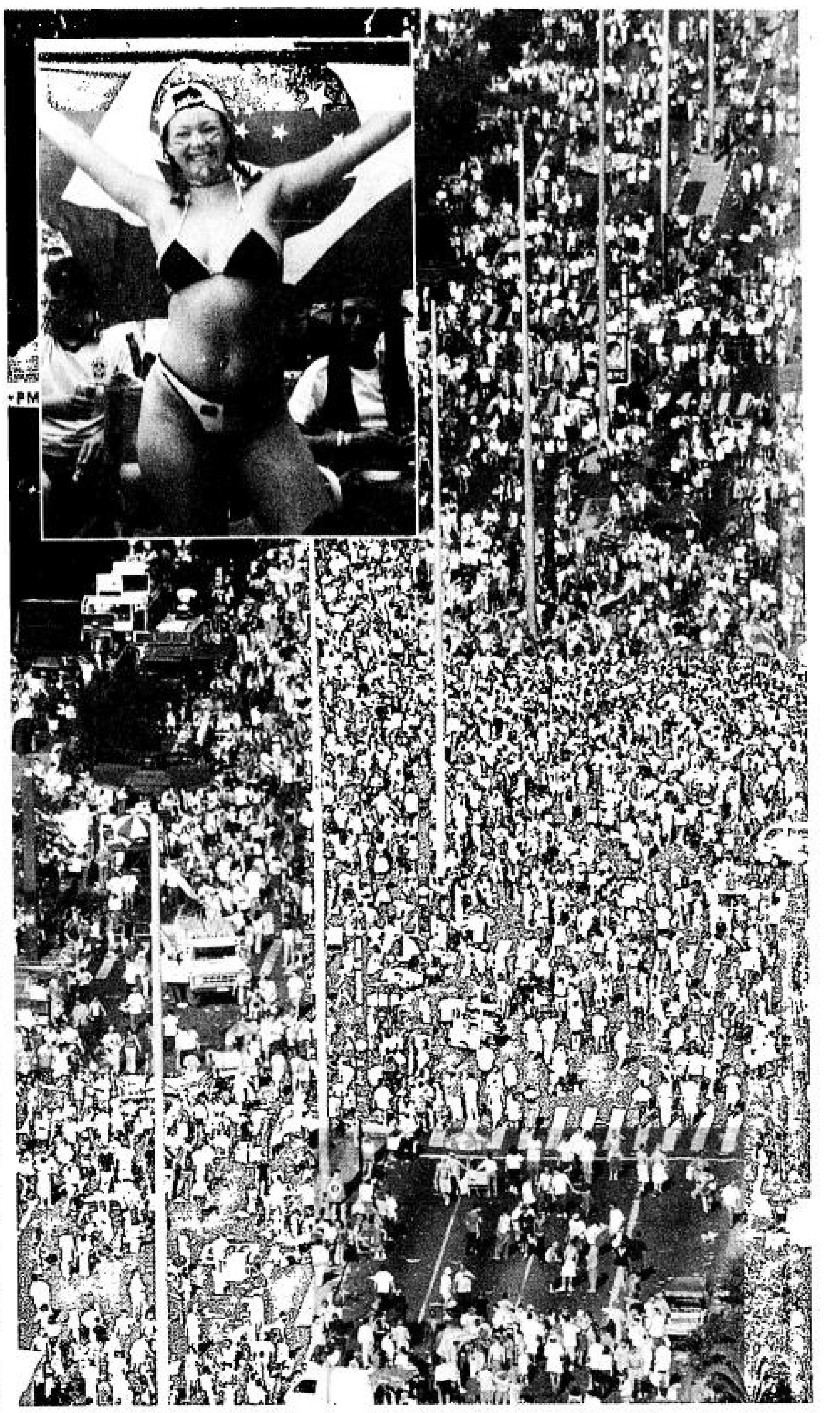
In Belem, at the mouth of the Amazon river, more than a 100,000 people converged on Ramos Plaza in the center of town to celebrate.

In Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest city, hundreds of thousands of revelers clogged it's main street, waving flags, parading and singing over the din of car horns.

In the northeastern city of Salvador da Bahia, tens of thousands clogged the colonial center where the band Olodum played the national anthem in a samba rhythm.

Many churches opened late Sunday in honor of the game and many bars stayed open all night, continuing service as the afternoon approached.

"My daughter is dating a German and even he was rooting for Brazil," said Maria Valeria Barbosa Barcelos as she bounced her 4-year-old granddaughter, wearing a No. 9 Ronaldo shirt, up and down in her arms. *AP*



THOUSANDS of Brazilian soccer followers (above) jam the Paulista Avenue in Sao Paolo to celebrate their team's victory. Inset, a scantily clad fan joins the merrymaking. AFP

Soccer's safest hands fail vs Ronaldo & Co.

YOKOHAMA, Japan–Germany's Oliver Kahn made just one mistake in this World Cup and it came at the most crucial moment of all–Sunday's final.

With the scores level in the 67th minute, Kahn failed to hold on to a shot from Rivaldo and Ronaldo pounced to slot in the loose ball to put Brazil ahead and on their way to a 2-0 victory.

He might have pushed the ball wide but Kahn chose to try to catch the shot allowing the effort to spill out off his chest and gave Ronaldo a straightforward opportunity.

It was the kind of shot Kahn has saved with comfort throughout his career and while there was nothing he could do about Ronaldo's second goal, the 33-year-old will be bitterly disappointed that the safest hands in football failed when they were needed most.

Kahn, an intense perfectionist, who studies psychology and uses "visualization" techniques to help him prepare for games, will now have a long close season in which to contemplate the cruelty of his profession where one error is remember longer than any series of saves.

Prior to the game Kahn had been voted the best goalkeeper of the tournament by FIFA, in recognition of his outstanding displays throughout.

Few would argue with that verdict.

Up until the final Kahn had conceded just one goal in the Cup and was instrumental to Germany's 1-0 win over United States and the 2-0 victory over Cameroon in the group stage and made a number of key saves in the semi-final against South Korea.

In the first half of Sunday's game he produced another top-drawer save, foiling Ronaldo at close-range with an outstretched leg.

Then seven minutes after the break he showed skill and his characteristic courage to parry a header from Gilberto Silva and then throw himself at the feet of the Brazilian as he attempted to follow in.

That double-save prompted a chorus of "Olli, Olli" from German supporters behind his goal, but how many of them will remember that potentially decisive save now? *AP*

German fans stunned, in tears

BERLIN–Hundreds of thousands of fans were stunned, and some in tears, as they gathered in downtown centers and bars to cheer on Germany on Sunday–only to see their national soccer team lose the World Cup final to Brazil 2-0.

As the crowd of 3,000 filed away from Berlin's Potsdamer Platz, many Germans remained in front of the large screen, holding their faces and crying after the final whistle blew.

"I'm so disappointed that we didn't win–I really thought I'd do it," said Kristin Klawikowksi, 22.

"I just can't talk, I'm speechless," said Uwe Bindl, decked out in the national colors of red, yellow and black.

Few violent incidents were reported, although five people were arrested in Offenbach for trying to break up a celebration by Brazilian fans, and another 12 were taken into custody in Leipzig after police and some masked fans clashed following Ronaldo's second goal. Eleven people were detained in Duesseldorf.

The tears quickly dried for the Germans, proud of a team that no one had predicted would make the final. After the final whistle blew on the match between the two most successful World Cup teams in history, Germans and Brazilians groups celebrated together.

"Naturally, I'm for Germany, but the most important thing is the party afterward," said Manuel Obermayer in Munich, whose wife is Brazilian.

There also were celebratipns in places like western Berlin's Kurfuerstendamm boulevard, where thousands still turned out to set off firecrackers and formed convoys of cars, honking horns and waving flags.

People quietly filed away from city center screenings across the country, from the 35,000 gathered at Munich's Leopoldstrasse in the south–a bigger crowd than the city's annual Oktoberfest–to the 50,000 gathered in the north in Hamburg's St. Pauli district.

In St. Pauli, people climbed lamp posts and jostled so hard to catch a view of the game on the big screen that police reported several fans passed out and needed medical treatment.

At Frankfurt, 12,000 people sporting the national colors of red, yellow and black in everything from flags to face paint filled the Roemer, the city's central square. As far as the eye could see, the crowds filled side streets.

The capital's Potsdamer Platz erupted with nonstop chants of "Deutschland, Deutschland." Again and again cheers of "Ollie, Ollie!" went up as their standout goalie, Oliver Kahn, thwarted Brazilian scoring chances. Still, it was Kahn's mistake that led to Brazil's first goal. *AP*

Wimbledon resumes; 'Henmania' lives on

HENMAN

WIMBLEDON–Wimbledon's second week begins with an unlikely bunch of men, a familiar cast of women, and real British hopes for the first homegrown male champion in 66 years.

With 14 of the top 16 men's seeds gone, eight of the 16 players left have already equalled or topped their best performances in a Grand Slam. There is only one former champion left in the draw–Richard Krajicek, who won in 1996. He and top-seeded Lleyton Hewitt, last year's U.S. Open champion, are the only Grand Slam title holders remaining.

Only five players have won previous grass-court titles, while two players–Feliciano Lopez and David Nalbandian–are making their Wimbledon debuts.

It is the worst showing by the top 16 seeds at a Grand Slam event since 1968. And when Jeff Morrison lost his third-round match Saturday, it left no Americans in the round of 16–the first time that has happened here since 1922.

The news isn't as grim on the women's side, where the four top-seeded players–all Americans–remain. On Monday, No. 1 Venus Williams takes on No. 16 Lisa Raymond, while No. 2 Serena Williams plays Chanda Rubin.

The Williams sisters have met in two of the last three Grand Slam finals and have won six of the last 11 major titles.

The 26-year-old Rubin, who lost to Venus Williams in the fourth round at the French Open, will be playing Serena Williams for the first time.

Elsewhere, No. 3 Jennifer Capriati plays Eleni Daniilidou of Greece, and No. 4 Monica Seles takes on Tamarine Tanasugarn of Thailand.

The seventh American woman in the round of 16 is Laura Granville, who faces No. 9 Amelie Mauresmo. The 21-year-old Granville, ranked 134th, is a qualifier playing in her first Wimbledon.

"Henmania" lives on in Tim Henman, the No. 4-seeded Englishman who's been a semifinalist three of the past four years. A nation is counting on him to take the next step.

"No pressure, Timbo, but choke now and we'll never forgive you," read a Daily Mirror front-page headline last week.

Henman plays Michel Kratochvil of Switzerland on Monday, while the Canadian-born Greg Rusedski, who now plays for Britain, takes on Xavier Malisse of Belgium.

The last British men's champion was Fred Perry in 1936.

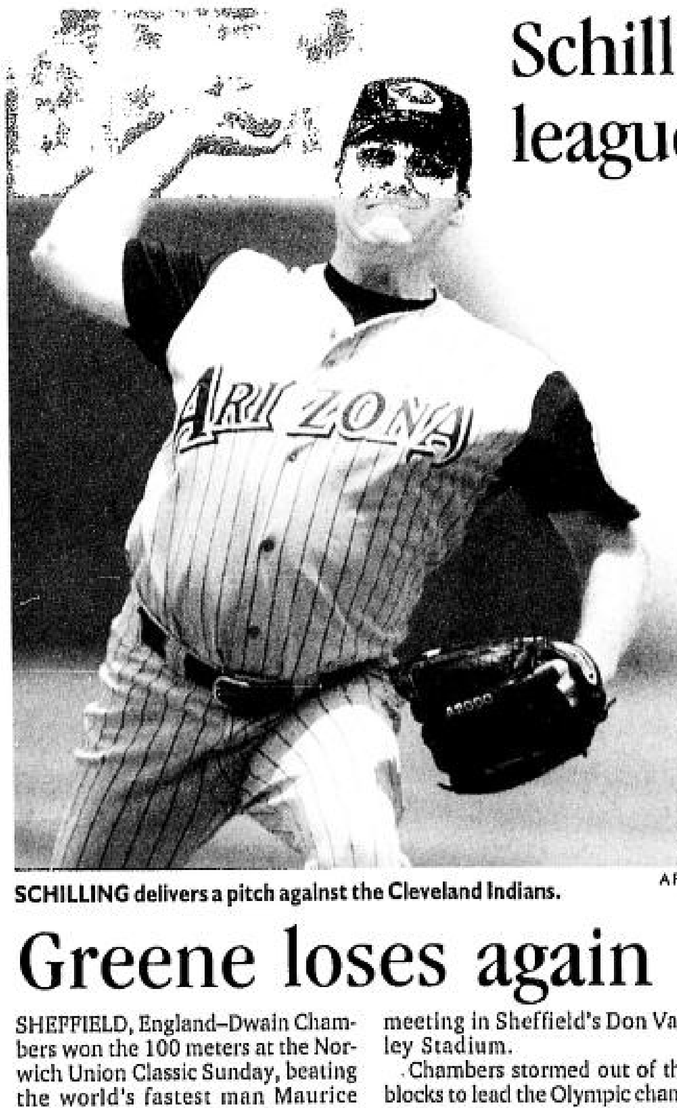
In a battle of two big servers coming off months of injuries, Krajicek faces Mark Philippoussis. The match doesn't figure to have more than two or three strokes per point.

Hewitt's progress has been largely unnoticed, following the hype around Henman and with the surprise early departures of Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi and others.

The 21-year-old Australian hasn't dropped a set in his first three matches, but he's wary of his fourth-rounder against Mikhail Youzhny of Russia.

Hewitt and Youzhny met 1 1/2 weeks ago in the third round at Den Bosch, Netherlands, where Hewitt needed 2 hours, 46 minutes over three difficult sets to beat the Russian. There were three breaks of serve each in the final set that Hewitt won in a tiebreaker. *AP*

Schilling picks up league-best 13th win



SCHILLING delivers a pitch against the Cleveland Indians. AFP

CLEVELAND–Curt Schilling got his major league-leading 13th win–and first in four starts–with a five-hitter Sunday, leading the Arizona Diamondbacks to a 5-2 win over the Cleveland Indians.

Schilling (13-3) cruised from the opening pitch and got his first victory since June 8 and first complete game in 16 starts.

Junior Spivey homered as the Diamondbacks took advantage of some early wild pitching by starter Danys Baez (6-6), who walked four in the first inning and didn't get through the fourth.

Jim Thome hit his 24th homer and Ellis Burks homered for the struggling Indians, who went 6-12 in interleague play and 11-15 in June - their worst month since April 1993.

Athletics 7, Giants 0

In Oakland, California, Tim Hudson pitched a five-hitter for his third career shutout as the Athletics beat San Francisco.

Scott Hatteberg had three hits and drove in three runs as the A's won for the second time in six games.

Hudson (6-7) won for the third time in four decisions after going 0-4 in his previous eight starts.

Blue Jays 7, Expos 5

In Toronto, Carlos Delgado hit a tiebreaking two-run homer in the seventh inning as Toronto beat Montreal in what was possibly the final game between the Canadian teams. *AP*

COMPLETE RESULTS

Atlanta 7, Boston 3, 10 Innings; Toronto 7, Montreal 5; Arizona 5, Cleveland 2; Tampa Bay 6, Florida 5, 12 Innings; Philadelphia 8, Baltimore 5; Minnesota 4, Milwaukee 3; Pittsburgh 6, Detroit 2; Kansas City 13, San Diego 1; Chicago Cubs 9, Chicago White Sox 2; Oakland 7, San Francisco 0; Colorado 4, Seattle 3; Houston at Texas, ppd., rain; Anaheim 5, Los Angeles 1; N.Y. Yankees 8, N Y Mets 0 AP

Greene loses again

SHEFFIELD, England–Dwain Chambers won the 100 meters at the Norwich Union Classic Sunday, beating the world's fastest man Maurice Greene for the second time in 48 hours.

Chambers followed up his victory over Greene in Oslo on Friday by leading a British one-two-three in the IAAF Grand Prix meeting in Sheffield's Don Valley Stadium.

Chambers stormed out of the blocks to lead the Olympic champion at 50 meters and finished with a winning time of 9.95 seconds. Greene, who seemed to lose heart after Chambers went past him, trailed in sixth in a lackluster 10.24 secs. *AP*

ASIAN TENPIN TILT

RP bowler captures gold

NATIONAL bowler Liza del Rosario bested her vaunted rivals from Singapore and Australia to strike gold in the women's singles event of the 17th Asian Tenpin Bowling Championships recently in Hong Kong.

Del Rosario scored lines of 210, 222, 236, 226, 277 and 212 for a 1383 total to defeat Valerie Teo of Singapore (1334) and Cathy Elwell of Australia (1261).

Del Rosario, a Columbia ball rep and first runner-up in the World Cup 2001 and doubles gold medalist with Ariane Cerdeña in the 2001 SEA Games in Malaysia, is currently ranked ninth in the world. She was also a former member of the Philippine National Youth Bowling Team.

Honing up skills for the Busan Asian Games in September, the RP women's team put up a good showing as team captain Jojo Canare finished sixth with 1217 pinfalls and Cecilia Yap wound up seventh with 1215. Teammate Liza Clutario turned in 1171 to finish 20th.

Biboy Rivera, a double gold medalist in the 2001 SEA Games, shot 1314 to place fourth even as the men's team made a decent finish in the prestigious event.

Rivera missed the silver medal by only five pins, while CJ Suarez was 17th with 1246 and Chester King 28th with 1226.

Four-time World Cup champion Paeng Nepomuceno (1219) ended 35th out of a total of 123 bowlers from Asia.

The 17th edition of the Asian meet was held at the SCAA Bowling Center with bowlers from 22 countries taking part. Powerhouse Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Australia and the Middle East countries also sent bowlers in the meet.

The doubles will be held next with the Philippine team looming as one of the favorites.

Marc Anthony Reyes

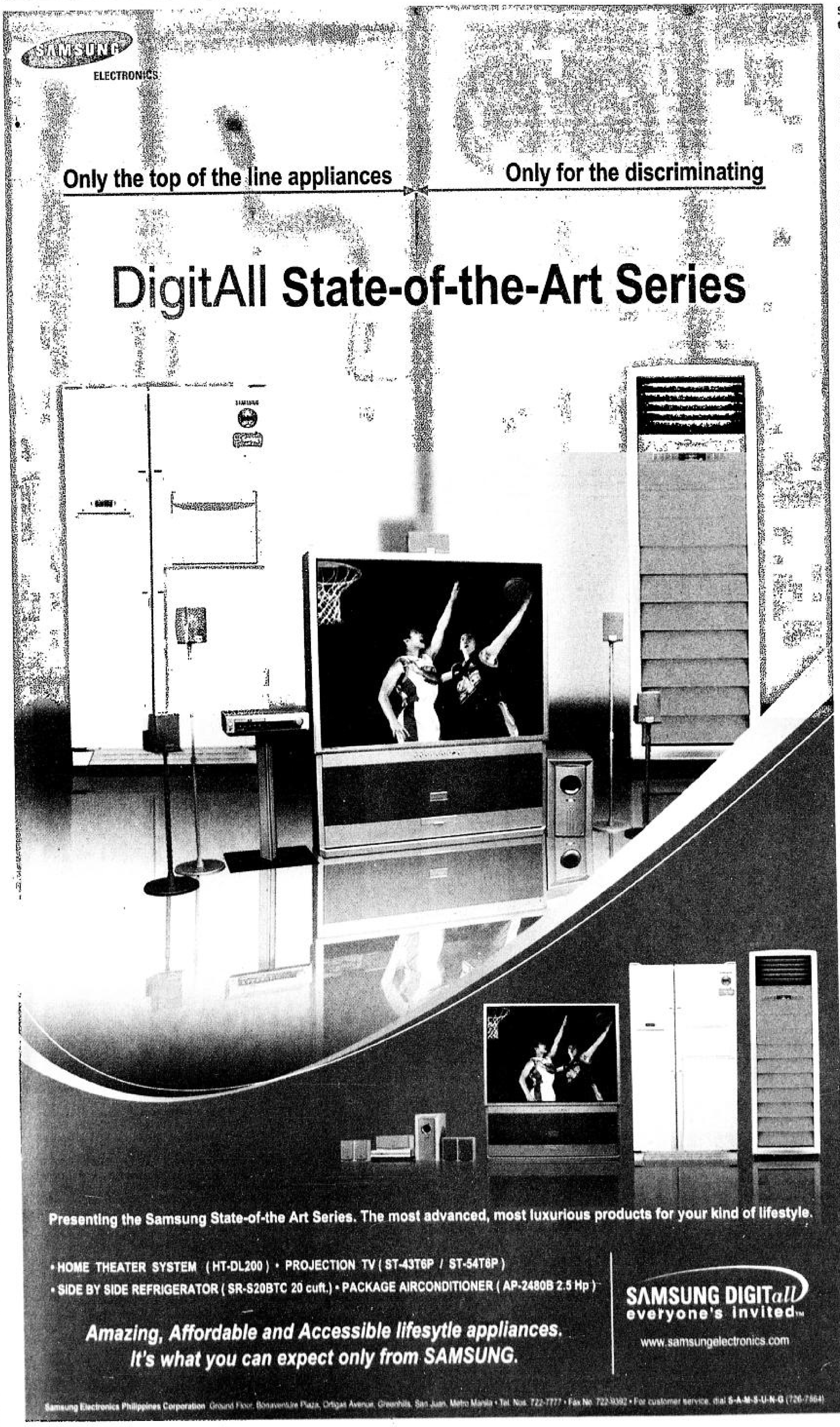
Kaya, Iloilo shine

KAYA Football Club, Sta. Barbara-Iloilo and Ateneo de Manila reigned supreme in the 1st adidas Lightning Football National Finals recently at the Ateneo de Manila football field.

Kaya FC, representing the National Capital Region, nipped West Negros College, 5-4, to capture the Open crown.

Sta. Barbara-Iloilo, carrying the fight for the Visayas, also posted a similar 5-4 victory over San Beda College-NCR in winning the Under-19 category.

Meanwhile, Ateneo de Manila-NCR edged Don Bosco Technical Institute-Negros Occidental of the Visayas, again via the score of 5-4, to cop the Under-15 championship.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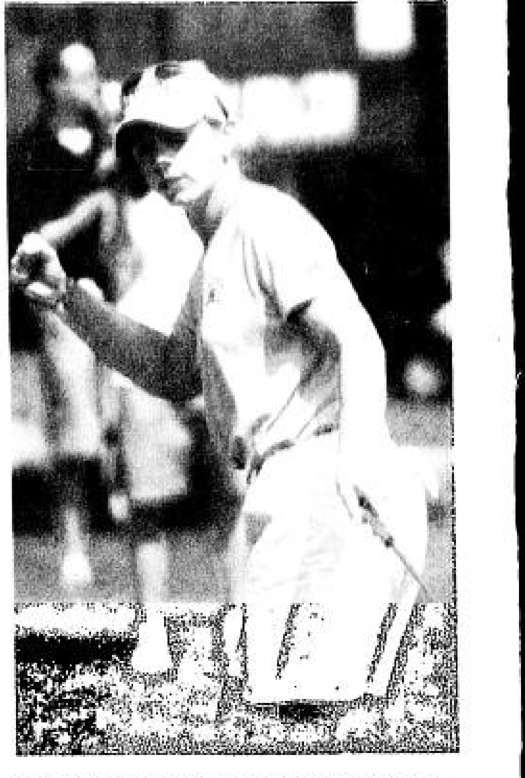

SORENSTAM clutches her fist after birdieing the 12th hole. AP

Sorenstam scores 2nd straight win

GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP, New Jersey—Annika Sorenstam shot a bogey-free 5-under-par 66 and cruised to a three-stroke victory in the ShopRite LPGA Classic on Sunday after Kate Golden gave away the lead with bogeys on four of the last five holes.

The victory was the second in as many LPGA starts for Sorenstam, her fourth in six events and sixth in 12 events this year. Add in the Australian Masters earlier this year and the Swede is clearly the one to beat in the Women's Open at Prairie Dunes Country Club in Hutchinson, Kansas.

"Maybe I shouldn't ask the question why it's happening, but I'm obviously enjoying this," Sorenstam said after winning the event on the Bay Course of the Marriott Seaview Resort for the second time in five years.

The win was also her third come-from-behind victory this year, and her 13th in 37 LPGA wins for the Hall of Famer.

The win in the $1.2 million event was worth $180,000 and pushed Sorenstam's earnings this year to $1,534,054, more than twice the amount of the tour's No. 2 money earner Se Ri Pak.

Sorenstam finished the event in the shadow of Atlantic City's casinos with a 12-under-par total of 201, with each round in the 54-hole tournament getting better.

What's even scarier is that she had a lot of birdie putt lip outs all three days.

Golden, second-round leader Juli Inkster and Carin Koch all finished tied for second, a shot ahead of Hiromi Kobayashi and rookie Natalie Gulbis. **AP**

Jenny shares 30th

JENNY Rosales' bid for another Top 10 finish was stalled by two bogeys on the last three holes as the Filipino settled for a share of 30th in the $1.2 ShopRite LPGA Classic at the Mariott Seaview Resort Bay course in Galloway, New Jersey.

The 23-year-old Rosales was already in hot pursuit of his Top 10 goal when she got through 15 holes at two under. But she bogeyed the16th and 18th for an even-par 71 and a 54-hole total of 211.

Rosales won $8,365 (about P420,000). She and brother Gerald, who's been caddying for him the past two weeks, now heads to Kansas City for the season's biggest event, the $2.9 million US Open.

Rosales, who boosted her earnings this season to almost $83,000 in 13 starts, is actually a qualifier in the US Open. She had missed the cut last year and will be trying to sustain a big improvement in recent weeks including a fifth place finish in the Wegman Rochester in New York. Dorothy Delasin is also competing in the US Open. *Jong Arcano*

Mattiace sizzles

MEMPHIS, Tennessee—Len Mattiace won for the second time this year as he rallied from a seven-stroke deficit at the start of the final round by shooting a 7-under 64 Sunday to win the St. Jude Classic by a stroke.

Mattiace, who won the Nissan Open in February, joined Tiger Woods (three) and Phil Mickelson (two) as the only multiple winners on tour this year.

He had a mistake-free day in a round where Glen Hnatiuk, looking for his first victory, blew a four-stroke lead. Mattiace turned in a bogey-free seven-birdie round that included five on the back nine and three consecutive on Nos. 15-17 for an 18-under 266 total and the $684,000 winner's check. **AP**

Pooley prevails

OWINGS MILLS, Maryland—Don Pooley made a 10-foot (three-meter) birdie putt on the fifth playoff hole to end an epic duel with Tom Watson and become the first qualifier to win the US Senior Open.

More than five hours after the duo teed off as the final twosome of the afternoon, Pooley finally ended the drama Sunday - and his 15-year winless drought on the PGA Tour.

After Watson's birdie-chip from the rough went wide of the hole, Pooley was poised to hit the potential winning putt before stepping back. He then returned to drain one of the most important shots of his career **AP**

Timeout

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WHILE good golf starts with the correct grip, good coaching starts with sound recruitment. No coach can win with inferior players inasmuch as no golfer can win with an incorrect grip. Everything right is the child of a right concept. That's universal.

I say this to reiterate the gospel truth about coaching: A coach can only be good if he's winning. And winning is determined usually by how much a coach knows—or doesn't know.

When Pat Riley was winning titles for the Los Angeles Lakers, he was the world's toast. When he stopped winning while coaching the Orlando Magic, the world forgot about him.

Did Pat forget the formula of correct coaching? Or has his formula of winning become obsolete?

Contrast him with Phil Jackson.

Jackson has had successes with different teams. Twice, he gave the Chicago Bulls "three-peats." Then, when he was barely warming up his seat in Los Angeles, he gave the Lakers their first "three-peat" this year. A "four-ward" now looms in the horizon—an NBA record should Phil succeed next year.

Name me a winning basketball coach that did not have at least two superstars before his team destroyed the opposition?

Pat Riley had Kareem Abdul Jabbar and Magic Johnson when he was winning for Los Angeles.

Phil Jackson had Michael Jordan and Scottie Pippen (and Dennis Rodman, too) when he won those two "three-peats" for Chicago.

In Orlando, Pat does not have the likes of Jabbar and Johnson.

In Los Angeles, Phil has the likes of Jordan and Pippen-Rodman in Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal. While Bryant has now approximated the talent of Jordan, O'Neal is almost the equivalent of Pippen and Rodman combined.

Let's go to the PBA. Its ongoing conference has the same flavor: imported stuff. The team that has the best imports usually ends up the winner. The coach that bags the best imports usually winds up the winner. As simple as that.

I just had my own happy coaching experience. Happy because our boss recognized an achievement worth remembering (at least for me) in a fitting ceremony held in the INQUIRER offices.

The feat?

My Sports Team won the annual INQUIRER Basketball Tournament, which ended a five-year title drought for the boys.

A correct player recruitment program was the key to our success. If you want to know how I went about it, I'd be glad to share it with you. But please call the office after I'm back from a forest I'd imagine to be awash with perfume. My cell phone is off while I smell the flowers.

See you around, fellas.

MBA NATIONALS

Compton keys LBC victory

ALL-STAR JULY 6
(BGCC, San Fernando City)
3 p.m.—South vs North

Standings

Northern Conference	**W**	**L**
Gilbey's Olongapo	4	2
LBC Batangas	4	2
Pampanga	2	3
Osaka Pangasinan	1	4
Southern Conference	**W**	**L**
Professional Davao	4	1
Casino Cagayan de Oro	3	2
Cebuana Lhuillier	2	3
RCPI Negros	1	4

COMPTON

ALEX Compton is really living up to his monicker, "The Heartbreaker."

Undaunted by several misses in regulation play, Compton hit a triple over two defenders at the buzzer to lift LBC Batangas over visiting Pampanga, 92-90, in the MBA National Conference at the Lipa City Youth and Cultural Center.

That shot earned wild cheers from Batanguenos but broke the hearts of the Stars, who were ready to celebrate when Billy Bansil made two freethrows with five seconds left, 90-89.

It was the third straight time that Compton had pulled out the Blades from the pits. This one was special, however, considering that before the deciding triple Compton was struggling. Fact was, he had only made two of his first 10 attempts from rainbow territory and was scoreless in the third and fourth quarters to settle for 12 points.

So unlike the Blades earlier victories.

On June 24, Compton nailed two of his five triples down the stretch to power the Blades past the Gilbey's Olongapo Volunteers, 97-90, at the San Andres Sports Complex in Malate. He finished with 28 points.

Two days later, Compton scored 21 points as the Blades repeated over the Osaka Pangasinan Waves, 91-80, at the Olongapo Convention Center.

Expectedly, Compton, the 1999 MVP, was the MBA Press Corps' runaway choice as Hardcourt Hero for June 24-30.

With him at the helm, the Blades have climbed to 4-2, sharing the lead with the Volunteers in the North division. The Stars, who were able to force overtime through a triple by veteran Ato Agustin with 10 seconds to go, fell to 2-3.

Meanwhile, the MBA takes a long break as its players will represent the country in the Jones Cup in Taiwan. The MBA All-Star, featuring the North and South selctions, will be held on July 6 at the Bren Z. Guiao Convention Center in San Fernando, Pampanga.

Roy Luarca

Scores:

BATANGAS 92—Rivera 21, Sanders 20, Laure 14, Compton 12, Mapalad 6, Espinosa 5, Ramirez 5, Martin 4, Cuevas 3, Corbin 2, De Castro 0.

PAMPANGA 90—Bansil 19, Agustin 16, Santos 16, Bautista 11, Gascon 10, Cruz 8, Tizon 4, Garcia 3, Ignacio 2, Melencio 1, Guintu 0, Santos 0.

Quarters: 24-23, 49-45, 67-67, 80-80.

'Parokya' heads bands in RP team fundraiser

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE COUNTRY'S top bands led by Parokya ni Edgar are set to rock and roll in a fund-raising concert for the sake of Team Philippines which is seeing action in the Busan Asian Games.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain yesterday said the concert, to be called "Alay sa Gintong Medalya," will be held on Aug. 9 at the Philsports arena.

He added that the event will kick off a series of activities intended to generate money for the national team's participation in the Busan Asiad until the 2003 Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam.

"We are happy that the country's best performers have agreed to get themselves involved in sports development," said Buhain. "It will surely generate not only funds but public interest in our campaign in Busan."

BUHAIN

Also offering their music for the sake of Philippine sports are True Faith, South Border, Jay Cayuca and RJ Rosales. More pop artists are expected to join the cause, according to PSC media bureau chief Arsenic Lacson.

Lacson said the Filipino athletes' theme song in Busan titled "Saan Ka Man Lumaban" will also be sung for the first time in the concert.

The song was composed by Moy Ortiz, musical director of The Company. Floy Quintos, who will direct the concert, wrote the lyrics.

Buhain said the concert is the first of its kind in Philippine sports. "We hope that by tapping popular artists and performers, we would be able to stir passion for our national athletes, who will need all the support they can get in Busan."

About 200 athletes are competing in the Asiad from Sept. 29 to Oct. 14 where the country is hoping to improve its one-gold medal performance in the 1998 edition held in Bangkok.

Buhain has been actively drumming up support for the national team in order to ease the PSC the burden of solely funding Philippine sports development.

Coseteng's streak ends

SUBIC—Lead driver Jody Coseteng annexed his seventh consecutive victory for Caltex Havoline-Autoplus but his winning streak was snapped by Cookie Ramirez in the afternoon race of the 2002 SVI Subic Grand Prix yesterday at the Subic International Raceway here.

Coseteng, also backed up by Red Horse, had a decent start in Round 7 but the extra 70 kilogram handicap proved uncomfortable that he came into a neck-and-neck battle with Ramirez in the first three laps.

Luckily, Ramirez committed a costly mistake of hitting the tires at the bus stop on the next lap and had to pass through the penalty drive thru. As Ramirez slipped to fourth, Coseteng built a wide margin over the rest of the pack on the sixth lap and his seventh straight triumph in the SVI Super Saloon Series was clearly inevitable.

UST A tops adidas Streetball Challenge

UNIVERSITY of Sto. Tomas Team A, drawing the points from Jojo Duncil, beat College of St. Benilde, 13-9, to top the senior division of the recent adidas Streetball Challenge 2002 National Capital Region eliminations at the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City.

Polytechnic University of the Philippines Team B, Xavier School and La Salle Greenhills also emerged champions in the other divisions of the event sponsored by Growee and WGA Zip in cooperation with Gatorade, Absolute pure distilled drinking water, Zed, Taylormade Golf, Salomon, Magic 89.8 dwTM and 99.5 RT.

The bull-strong Duncil scored a game-high seven points and was ably supported by teammates Francis Allera, Andrew Dacanay and Michael Espa.

In the distaff side, it was an all-PUP showdown as PUP-Team B and PUP-Team C faced each other in the final. In the end, PUP-Team B, spearheaded by NCRAA Mythical Team member Genebeth Ramos, got the better of their opponents to prevail, 7-6. Other members of the triumphant PUP-B team were Rochelle Gabest, Gladys Aboyme and Michelle Pacheco.

Shifty guard Gabriel Sia made mincemeat out of the defense of Ateneo de Manila University to topscore for Xavier School and lead the Stallions to the win.

Xavier clobbered Ateneo, 16-12, to conquer the Juniors division. Backing up Sia were Woodward Co, Eric Dee and Rejan Lee.

In the Midgets division, Nicholas Salva's inside game and diminutive Matthew Sia's steady shooting from the free throw line catapulted La Salle Greenhills to the championship, as they beat Xavier School, 16-12. Vince Anthony Fran and Marco Yulo complete the La Salle Greenhills lineup.

Roy Luarca

PCC anniversary derby

THE PASAY City Cockpit, recognized as the classiest and cleanest cockfighting center in Metro Manila, celebrates its 15th anniversary on July 18 and 20 by staging the PCC Anniversary 5-Cock Derby.

PCC managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano urged prospective participants to make early reservation of cockhouses, since a maximum of 150 entries will be accommodated. A total of 156 participants joined last year.

Participants will receive a rice cooker, special rice, two-burner gas stove, casino chips and product giveaways of Sagupaan High Action ready-mix maintenance feeds and Sagupaan Hammer. Entry fee is P15,000.

Meanwhile, the first five winners will get P8,000 each as the PCC 2-cock *ulutan* derby gets going at 9 a.m. today. The rest will get P6,000. Registration fee is P1,100.

Participants who can register a victory within eight seconds will get a brand-new scooter as bonus. For inquiries, please contact 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746.

Cebu boxers show might

CEBU CITY—Team Cebu City recovered from a poor start to retain the overall championship in the National Youth Open Amateur Boxing Championships held Saturday inside the Ayala Entertainment Center here.

Despite absorbing defeats in the 42 kg categories, the Cebuanos struck back and wound up with six gold medals and two silvers as it swept division I (36-42 kg) and division II (45-60 kg) in the weeklong tournament.

The TCC winners in division I were Rocky Fuentes in the 38 kg class, Roben Minoza (40 kg) and Alex John Banal (41 kg) while the Division II victors were Robert Allanic (45 kg), Ceasar Amonsot (57 kg) and Alexis Canamo (60 kg).

Bago City was a distant second with two golds, courtesy of Reynan Salimbot (48 kg) and Ronald Mayor (54 kg), three silvers and two bronzes in the event co-presented by Revicon, Philippine Sports Commission, SKYGO-Gillamac and Nature's Spring.

Erstwhile leader Mandaue City ended third with two golds, through Reynaldo Caitorn and Jomar Magbagon, and three silvers. Tolonan, Cotabato came out fourth in a record-field of 38 teams with one gold through Johnny Cadigal plus two bronzes.

Caitom and Cadigal were adjudged best boxers in division I, while Alona Bohol's Reynaldo Bautista took the best boxer plum in Division II.

Manny Lopez, president of the sanctioning Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, congratulated the event organizers led by Tony Aldeguer as well as Cebu City and its sports commission for the successful hosting of the event.

Roy Luarca

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

TENNIS: Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships, Day #7 Highlights at 8 a.m. (r – 11 a.m.), Day 7, Round of 16 at 12 noon (r), Day 8, Ladies Singles Quarterfinals at 7 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: McDonald's LPGA Championship, Final Round at 10 a.m., 5 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

Golf Classics - The Nearly Men at 10:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

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SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ● Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

▩ **Compton lifts Blades** /A19

▩ **RP bowler bags gold** /A18

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COMMISSIONER'S CUP

Phone Pals eye 4-0 card tonight

By June Navarro

GAME TODAY (Cuneta Astrodome)
7 p.m.—Talk N Text vs Selecta-RP

JUST like in the previous conference, Talk N Text is on a roll again.

Head coach Bill Bayno said his Phone Pals promised to keep their fiery form unlike in the past when they stumbled in the playoffs following a hot start.

The Phone Pals try to remain unbeaten when they gun for a fourth straight win against Selecta-RP Team tonight in the PBA Samsung Commissioner's Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

"My boys have improved a lot. They have learned their mistakes in the past. We still love to run but we make sure to defend well on the other end," said Bayno, a former coach of the University of Nevada-Las Vegas Running Rebels in the US NCAA.

The Phone Pals zoomed to an 8-0 start in the Governors Cup and finished at the top of the eliminations before the eighth-seeded San Miguel Beermen booted them out of the quarterfinals.

With the memories of that historic reversal stuck in their minds, the Phone Pals easily disposed the Shell Turbo Chargers, 89-72, and the FedEx Express, 96-90, in their first two games.

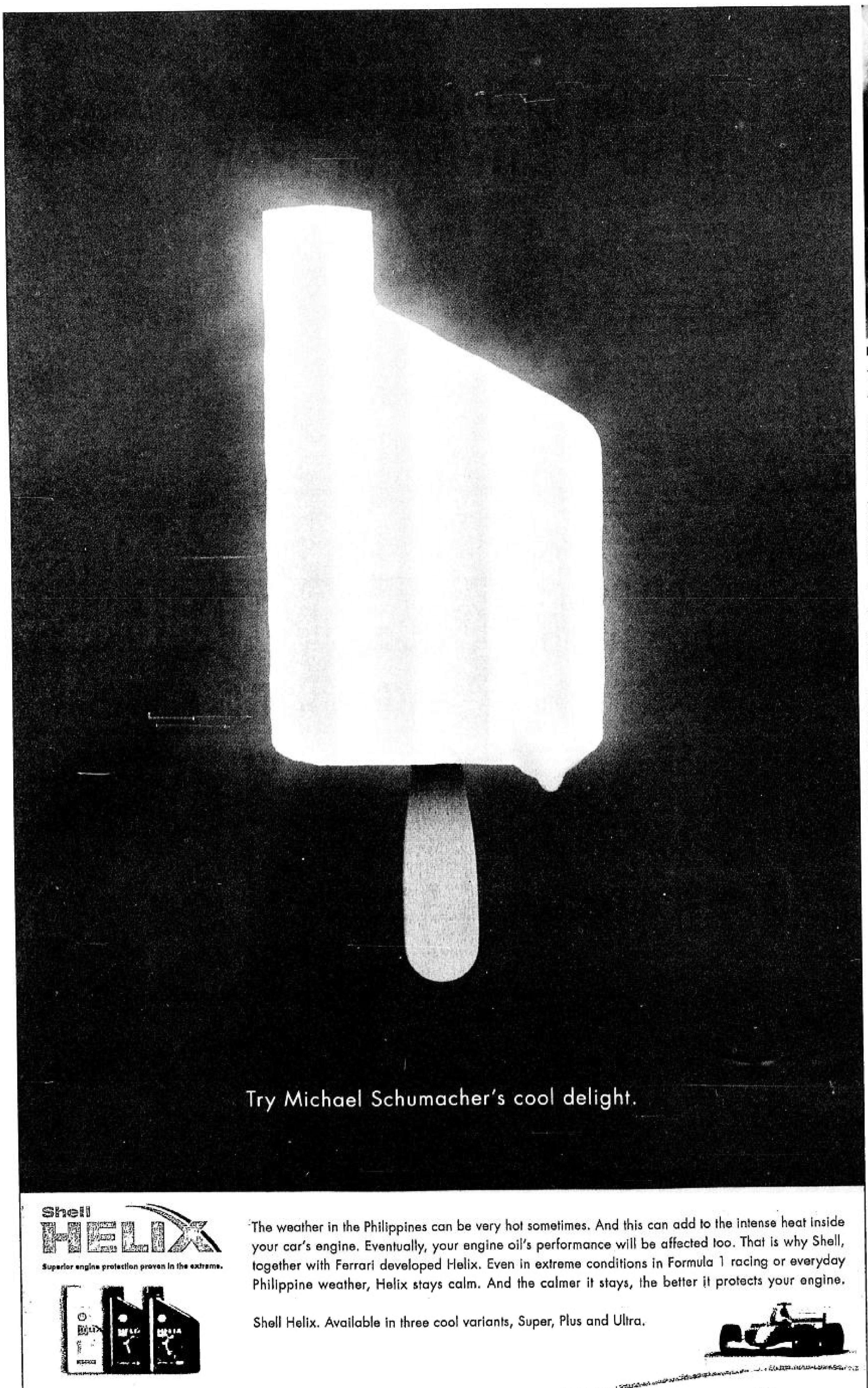
Their biggest test came against the Sta. Lucia Realtors, whom they fought tooth and nail before tallying an 83-71 triumph for a pacesetting 3-0 slate.

Gerald Honeycutt registered his 10th double-double performance dating back from last conference as the bulky 6-foot-8 slotman topscored with 30 points on top of 13 rebounds and seven assists against the Realtors.

Honeycutt's impressive abilities will be tested anew by man-mountain Asi Taulava, Dennis Espino and defense specialist Chris Jackson.

The Selecta-RP Team wilted against the Barangay Ginebra Kings, 85-81, during its debut but came roaring back to life against San Miguel Beer, 74-62, to install themselves at solo third (1-1).

Danny Johnson, Victor Pablo, Mark Telan, Gilbert Demape and Kenny Evans will be pitted against the country's brightest basketball stars.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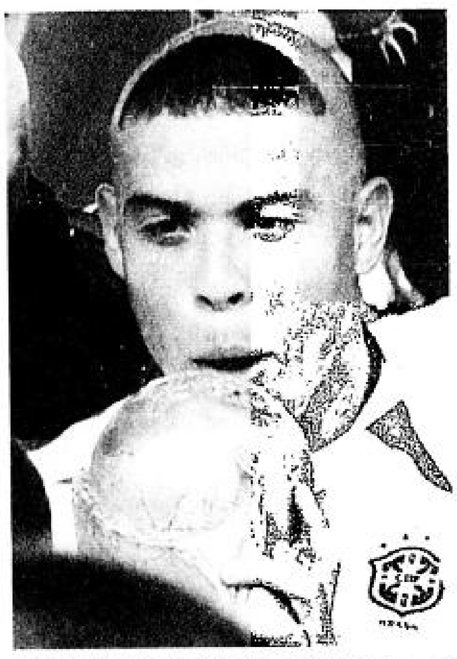


RONALDO looks at the Jules Rimet Cup. AP

For Ronaldo, redemption better than sex

YOKOHAMA—A gentle rain began just before kickoff, the better to wash away the painful memories of four years ago. Maybe that's when Ronaldo first sensed this night might belong to him.

"In '98 I also played well," he said. "But when you lose, people forget."

The problem is that people didn't forget everything.

Redemption stories don't normally star athletes this young. But that's hardly the only thing exceptional about Ronaldo Luiz Nazario de Lima.

In Brazil, soccer has a resonance that extends well beyond sport. When the national team loses in the World Cup, the way it did with Ronaldo as its point man four years ago, it was portrayed back home as a tragedy and he was cast as the villain.

This time around, the stock market is slumping, the currency is sliding. But because the 25-year-old striker's two goals powered Brazil to a 2-0 win Sunday and an unprecedented fifth World Cup title, there is dancing in the streets.

And Ronaldo is a hero again.

In the middle of last week, he shaved off all his hair except for a wedge-shaped patch at the front. Brazilian kids lined up for the same treatment, horrifying parents across the country. Unfortunately, the trend didn't stop there.

"God help me!" cleaning woman Ana Paula Noronha Viera de Paula complained when someone asked about Ronaldo's new look. "My boyfriend cut his hair like that and I made him shave it all off!"

But now Ronaldo will be forgiven that sin, and more. The two goals gave him eight for the tournament, and an even dozen since he donned the yellow and green at the World Cup for the first time in 1994—the same number Pele scored in his four celebrated go-rounds for Brazil.

So it was fitting that Pele was on the podium when Ronaldo and his teammates collected their medals. More than any other player soccer has ever seen, the Brazilian great set a standard not just for winning, but for how "the beautiful game" should be played.

Luiz Felipe Scolari, a former fullback from Brazil and now the national team coach, looked on admiringly.

"The secret is enthusiasm, friendship, union and sacrifice," he said. But continuity, Scolari added a moment later, was as important in his countrymen's success as any of those qualities.

Asked whether being World Cup champion was better than sex—considering the Brazilians spent 40 days away from wives and girlfriends—Ronaldo replied with a sly smile.

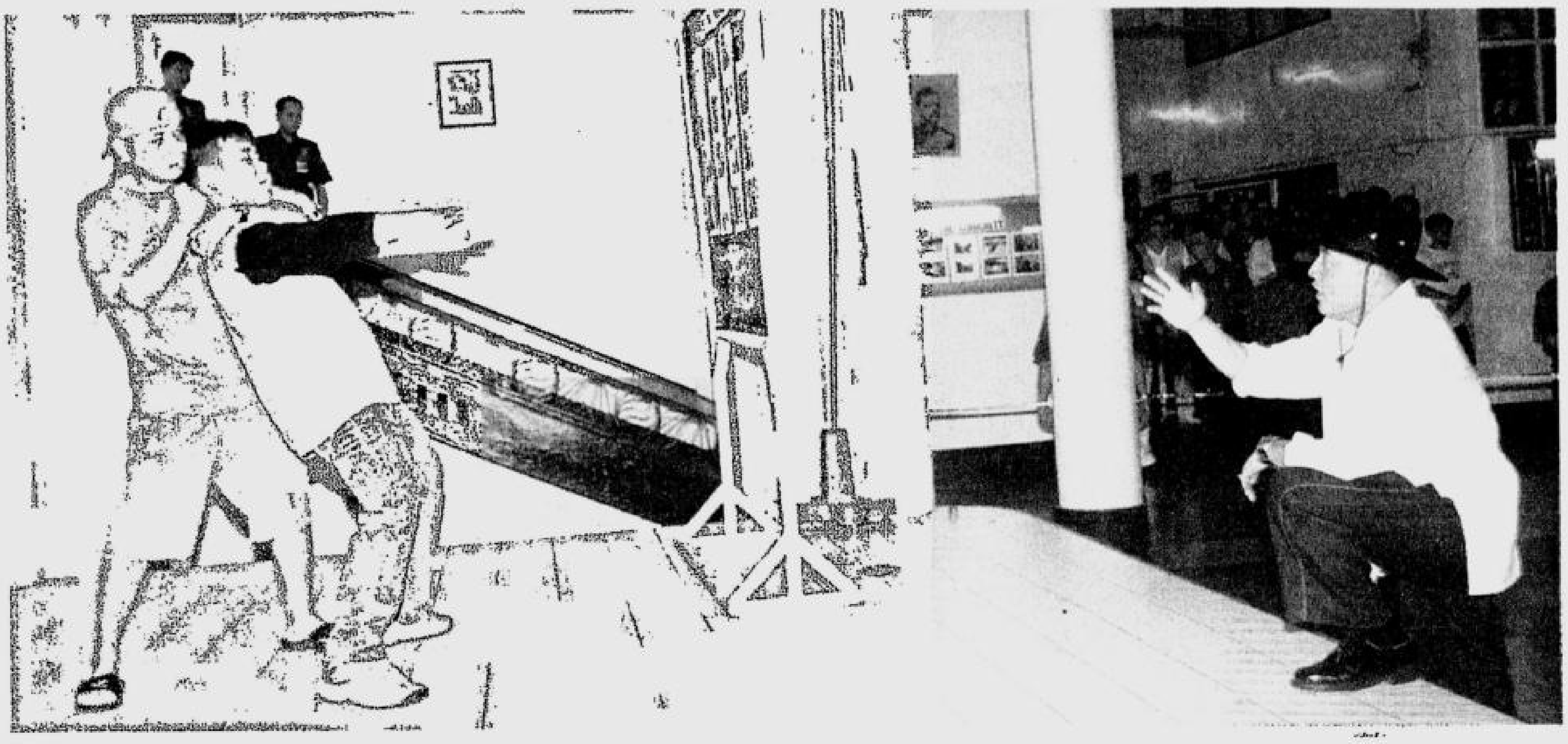
"The World Cup," he said, "happens only every four years." *AP*

More post-World Cup stories on page A17

'Pinpoint responsibility,' Atienza tells city doctors /A22

Dads lose face over oil depot stay in Pandacan /A22

On Target: Wycoco should call Lacson's bluff /A22



THIS IS HOW YOU DO IT

Learning their lesson from the experience of their Pasay City counterparts, whose botched rescue attempt on May 31 resulted in the killing of both hostage and hostage taker, members of the Western Police District do their own exercise in handling hostage situations, including kibitzer control and negotiating with the hostage taker. The drill was held at the Western Police District headquarters on UN Avenue in Ermita, Manila.

ERIK ARAZAS

Balalas withdraw raps vs cops

By Christian V. Esguerra

PASAY City policemen, who in May bungled a rescue operation in a hostage drama that ended in the killing of both victim and suspect, have been cleared by the parents of the slain victim.

The parents of Dexter Balala, the 4-year-old hostage, yesterday withdrew the homicide charges they filed against the 21 policemen and eight security guards of Philtranco bus terminal, where the hostage drama happened.

In their affidavit of desistance, Darius Balala and his wife Salvacion said their son died of multiple stab wounds inflicted by the hostage taker, Diomedes Talvo, on May 31. The policemen had shot Talvo when he started to stab the boy.

"The accidental shooting of Dexter could not be blamed on anyone," the Balala couple wrote in Filipino. "The policemen and the security guards were merely performing their duties when they fired at Talvo."

The Balalas submitted the one-page affidavit during yesterday's preliminary investigation by the Pasay prosecutor's office and amid the rumor that the policemen had been trying to make a financial settlement with the victim's family.

A Jaimelita Gabriel, who introduced herself as the first cousin of Darius, told reporters that the family withdrew the charges upon the advice of relatives.

"They feared for their safety," Gabriel said of the couple. "They were not paid."

"The case is not yet closed," prosecutor Rolando Abrazaldo told the INQUIRER. "We still have to weigh the evidence to determine if we would elevate the case (to the regional trial court)."

The slain boy's parents earlier confirmed that Florencio Mateo, the chief of the Pasay City parking and traffic bureau, had offered them P220,000 in exchange for the dropping of the charges against the policemen and guards.

Mateo is said to be a cousin of former Pasay police chief Eduardo de la Cerna, who was sacked for mishandling the rescue operation.

De la Cerna and a couple of other police officers were smiling yesterday when the Balalas swore before prosecutor Abrazaldo that they were neither paid nor coerced into withdrawing their case.

De la Cerna, who acted as ground commander during the May 31 hostage crisis, was evasive when reporters asked him for comment after the preliminary investigation. "I don't feel relieved," was all he said.

The Balalas, who initially blamed the police for the death of their son, also refused to comment.

Prosecutor Abrazaldo said the withdrawal would have a "big impact" on the case, especially since acting Pasay police chief Oscar Catalan did not object to the affidavit of desistance.

Catalan is representing the Southern Police District as the complainant against the Pasay officers and the security guards.

Abrazaldo, who heads a three-man panel of prosecutors, set the next preliminary investigation for July 8. Catalan is expected to present police ballistics experts to identify who among the respondents had fired their guns during the May 31 hostage incident.

Ex-actor Ronnel Victor dies of cancer in Chicago

By Leah Salterio and Marinel Cruz

VICTOR

FORMER movie star Ronnel Victor, known for his boy-next-door roles, succumbed to cancer of the colon yesterday in Chicago, Illinois (2 p.m. Manila time.) He turned 32 only last June 21.

"We've done everything," Victor's first cousin Marnie Omamalin told the INQUIRER from Dipolog City yesterday.

She said Ronnel had a tissue transplant last January following months of chemotherapy for the cancer.

Ronnel—real name, Ronnel Isip—became comatose after he suffered massive rectal bleeding last Sunday, the cousin said. He died yesterday after months of confinement at the St. Francis Hospital in Illinois.

The cancer was diagnosed June 2000. The biopsy showed that the disease was already in the third stage. Colonic cancer is characterized by the presence of masses in the large intestine and sporadic changes in bowel movement.

"His family was at his bedside when he passed away," Omamalin said. "Before he died, he said he wanted to stay with his family."

The actor's remains will no longer be flown to the Philippines and will instead be cremated in Chicago, the cousin said.

Ronnel is survived by his parents, two siblings, two children and his partner of six years.

The actor had left show business in 1993 but he recorded a Visayan album in 1996.

He was a member of German Moreno's "That's Entertainment" on television and was discovered for show business by the late comedian-TV host Ike Lozada who also managed his career for a while.

From TV, Ronnel went on to make movies and was paired with the likes of Lotlot de Leon, Rita Avila and Sheryl Cruz. He starred in a number of youth-oriented movies mostly for Robbie Tan's Seiko Films where he was a contract star.

From playing boy-next-door roles, Ronnel later shifted to character roles.

He played the role of a seminarian in the 1987 hit "Working Girls 2" which starred Gloria Diaz, Dina Bonnevie and Dang Cecilio.

Submit new contract, Jancom told

By Leila Salaverria

METRO MANILA Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday advised Jancom Environmental Corp. to "forget about" its $350-million contract with the government.

"I would advise Jancom to better forget about it," Fernando said yesterday in a news conference.

He said the firm would be better off submitting a completely new contract.

"If they want to continue doing business with government, they could make another completely new proposal," Fernando said.

The MMDA earlier announced that Metro Manila mayors had decided as a council to recommend to Malacañang the scrapping of the contract with Jancom to dispose of 3,000 tons of Metro Manila's garbage.

Fernando said the firm could not continue changing the provisions of the contract every time it meets with opposition or is shot down by various parties.

"We say we cannot afford it, they make another offer," he said. "It's like we are being held under the gun. If the city mayors say they cannot afford it, Jancom should not insist."

He said the local government units were not even party to the Jancom contract when it was ratified.

The Jancom deal has come under fire for requiring the use of incinerators. However, Jancom had expressed willingness to downgrade its operations and use sanitary landfills instead. Its tipping fee had also been assailed for being "exorbitant," and the firm has offered to lower it to $20.40 per metric ton, which according to its spokesperson Ricky Alegere is lower than what the MMDA is spending for the same amount of trash.

Jancom had also said it is willing to provide the land for the sanitary landfills at no cost to the government. The Jancom deal would also bring about the closure of Pier 18 and the Payatas open dumpsite since the firm can take care of the garbage being dumped there, said Alegre.

Alegre said yesterday Jancom is happy to hear that the MMDA chair is "open-minded."

Fernando's next targets: contractors

FERNANDO

By Leila Salaverria

CONTRACTORS must meet their deadlines for the infrastructures and roadwork they are doing so that they will not obstruct traffic longer than necessary, according to Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

If the contractors miss their deadlines, the MMDA would have to step in and finish the projects, Fernando warned.

"Finish your projects by the scheduled completion date," he said. "Otherwise the MMDA will destroy the structures or fill up the diggings. If possible, we will finish the construction ourselves and charge the cost to the contractors."

He said the digging of roads and the building of structures cannot be avoided but those involved in these projects must make sure they work fast so as not to contribute to the traffic problem.

Fernando had said that sidewalks must be cleared of all obstructions so pedestrians could use them and not clog up the roads.

He said all obstructions and structures on sidewalks must be removed, including trees, stalls, billboards, eateries and barangay halls.

Fernando yesterday urged barangay officials and citizens to take the initiative and dismantle the structures, including the barangay halls, themselves and not to wait for the MMDA to do it for them.

He stressed that there will be no exemption to the rule.

"We cannot give any exemption to anyone," he said. "It will make our work more difficult if we give exemptions."

Ruffa's 'filmscam' case dismissed

By Jerome Aning

A MANILA regional trial court has finally dismissed for insufficiency of evidence the estafa case filed against Ruffa Gutierrez, her brother Rocky and several others in the 1994 Manila Film Festival scandal.

Judge Felixberto Olalia Jr. of the Manila RTC Branch 8 made the ruling.

In a three-page order dated June 7, Judge Olalia said the prosecutor failed to present "the required quantum of evidence to warrant (the) conviction of the accused."

Of the two elements of estafa—deceit and damage that can be estimated—the prosecution was able to prove only the first. The judge said proceeding with the case would be "superfluous" because of the prosecution's failure to prove the second element.

During the awarding nights in the 1994 film festival, Gutierrez, one of the presenters of the best actor award, announced the name of Gabby Concepcion as winner, when the name of another actor, Edu Manzano, was written on the certificate prepared by the accounting firm SyCip Gorres and Velayo.

Ruffa's brother Rocky announced Ruffa's name as the winner in the best actress category, when Aiko Melendez had been picked to receive the trophy.

The co-presenters of the awards, Nanette Medved and Gretchen Baretto, testified in court about the deceit.

But the court said the prosecution did not substantially prove that there was "damage or prejudice capable of pecuniary estimation."

Manzano and Melendez were not part of the complaint. They said they had received their awards.

The complainants were the City of Manila and the film festival executive committee. They sought P1 million in damages.

But lawyer Espiridion Laxa, the co-chair of the committee, had denied that the body lost any money during the scandal.

"The established doctrine is that a litigant must rely on the strength of his evidence and not on the weakness of the evidence of his adversary," the judge said.

The court also ordered both parties to shoulder the cost of litigation, at P25,000 each for the Gutierrez siblings and [illegible] for the city government.

Skyway suspends new toll increase

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PNCC Skyway Corp. yesterday yielded to raging public pressure and suspended the implementation of yet another toll increase until July 16.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had talked to company officials late last week to convince them to hold the increase, according to Ramon Borromeo, spokesperson of the Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp.

Borromeo said the President wanted the increase suspended until the public has been properly informed of the new toll rates.

Borromeo said the PNCC Skyway Corp. would lose about P2 million for each day the toll rate increase is delayed.

Ray Junia, who heads a group of resident opposing the toll increase, said the company "can never convince the people to accept the supposed benefits of the increase." "(The issue) is not a question of time but a question of reason," he said.

In a statement, Parañaque Rep. Eduardo Zialcita said that with the deferment of the increase, his petition before the Supreme Court to stop the increase "would most likely be affirmed . . . because these increases are onerous and untimely."

"Our people already suffer from the power purchase adjustment or PPA as well as the recent increase in our water bills," Zialcita said.

Public relations executive Jojo Alejar said sectoral groups from Parañaque, Taguig and Muntinlupa are planning protest rallies at the Toll Regulatory Board and at the tollway

METROBRIEFS

Collision in QC

QUEZON City High School students Isabel Tamding, 16; Alvin Alcala, 9; Darren Alcala, 12; Princess Diane Brano, 16; and Marvin Dayao, 14; did not make it to school yesterday when the tricycle they were riding hit the rear end of a Mazda pick-up truck, police said. The collision threw the students out of the tricycle and led to various injuries, including broken bones, police said.

Tricycle driver Rogelio Santiago lost control of the vehicle at the corner of Scout Fuentebella and Scout Tobias in Barangay South Triangle, police said. The driver of the pick-up truck, Christopher Maranan, told police that the tricycle was speeding.

Police were looking for Santiago who fled after the accident. Santiago was said to have been driving without license. *Alcuin Papa*

Rape in Pasig

POLICE arrested truck helper Gilberto Laison, 20, of Munting Bahayan in Pasig City after a 25-year-old housewife accused him of rape. The victim told police that Laison raped her while she was sleeping inside her house last week. She said she woke up as Laison fondled her body. The victim said she resisted Laison, but he returned with an icepick and threatened to stab her if she resisted. She said he warned that he would kill her if she reported the rape. Police filed rape and frustrated homicide charges against Laison who is now detained at Pasig City Jail.

Nelson Forte Flores

Amok in QC

VENDOR Ismael Pitogo, 25, a resident of Caloocan City and a native of Butuan City, died from several gunshot wounds in the body after police shot him when he went on a rampage on Sunday in Quezon City. Police said Pitogo run amuck with an icepick along IBP Road and Katipunan Street, Barangay Commonwealth in Quezon City. SPO1 Constantino Pitagan and PO3 Reynaldo Manegote tried to pacify Pitogo, authorities said. Instead of surrendering, Pitogo attacked Pitagan and stabbed him twice in the shoulder, police said. Manegote then shot Pitogo before he could stab Pitagan again, police said. Police said that Pitogo had stabbed one of his drinking buddies Joseph Mullet, 22, and had run amuck to elude arrest.

Alcuin Papa

Raid in Parada

POLICE arrested Antonio So, his relatives Edmund and Margaret Lee-So, and workers Rodrigo Temperatura, Randy Pat, Jesus Barbar, Anecito Cabusas and Josue Baribar during a raid over the weekend of So's warehouse for allegedly manufacturing fake cooking oil. Members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) at Camp Crame raided the warehouse on De Guzman Street, Barrio Parada, Valenzuela after world shooting champion Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla, owner of Malabon Soap and Oil Industrial Corporation Incorporated, which manufactures Spring Cooking oil, filed a complaint against So. Prior to the raid, members of the CIDG managed to buy from So's warehouse boxes of cooking oil which were later found to be fake as shown by an examination of the Bureau of Food and Drugs. Police found 15 cans of repacked Spring Cooking Oil, 20 pieces of tin cans, a sealing machine and some 1,000 pieces of sealing caps. Charges of violations of Article 188 and 189 of the Revised Penal Code, for unauthorized used of Spring Cooking Oil logo and seal, and intellectual property code of the Philippines have been filed against the suspects.

Tina Santos

Robbery in Navotas

POLICE arrested Crispin Biay, 21, of Kaunlaran Village, Caloocan; Frederick Magarso, 22, and Renato España, 29, both of Langaray Street, Dagat-dagatan, after they held up Laurenicio Villa on Sunday in Navotas. The suspects were charged with robbery in band and possession of deadly weapons. Police said that before the arrest, the suspects, accompanied by an unidentified man, were armed with knives, and robbed Villa of more than P2,000 cash. The suspects are alleged members of the Biay Hold-up Group, police said. Police said Biay has a string of criminal cases, including possession of deadly weapon in 1998 after a failed robbery. He was convicted for drug pushing in 1994, and served sentence for three-and-a-half years. Police said Magarso was involved in a robbery case in 1994 *Tina Santos*

FOOD POISONING

'Pinpoint responsibility'

By Jerome Aning

MAYOR ATIENZA
AMININ NINYO ANG INYONG KASALANAN
HUWAG NIYO NAMAN KAMING

ERIK ARAZAS

STUDENTS of Tomas Earnshaw Elementary School and their parents ask Atienza to act on the case of food poisoning in the school.

THE MANILA city government has begun conducting its examination on what exactly caused the digestive ailment which struck about 400 students of the Tomas Earnshaw Elementary School in Sta. Ana, Manila over the weekend.

Mayor Lito Atienza said he has ordered the city's health department to "find out what caused (the alleged food-poisoning) and pinpoint responsibility."

The sick students were brought to the Ospital ng Maynila, Philippine General Hospital, Trinity Hospital and Lourdes Hospital after experiencing abdominal pains, vomiting, diarrhea and fever.

The pupils reportedly consumed tuna and egg sandwiches, macaroni soup and pineapple juice bought from the school canteen.

Atienza said the test would include laboratory cultures on the water used to make the pineapple juice and on samples of the sandwiches and soup.

Rectal swabs would also be taken from the victims. Analyses of these would be compared with the results of the culture test.

The tests are expected to be completed by Wednesday afternoon.

Reports reaching the mayor's office said most of the ill students have been discharged.

As of yesterday morning, two were still confined at the PGH, 21 at Lourdes and another two at Trinity.

Of the 335 students brought to the OsMa, only three remain for observation and intravenous fluid treatment.

The mayor also thanked officials of barangays around the school for their fast response to the medical emergency. Most of the victims were rushed to the hospitals in barangay ambulances and service vehicles.

As soon as the first cases of poisoning were reported, barangay officials went around their communities to check on residents whether they have family members studying at the school who were experiencing symptoms of poisoning.

Dads lose face over oil depot stay

By Jerome Aning

MANILA councilors might have difficulty explaining why the oil depot would stay longer in Pandacan.

"We must now have a very good explanation why are we going to reverse outselves by approving the agreement between the mayor, the oil firms and the energy department," said one councilor, who asked not to be named.

Another councilor, Jocelyn Dawis-Asuncion of the sixth district, said in a recent interview over station dzMM that the depot could still face closure.

Asuncion, author of the ordinance that effectively closed the terminal, said the memorandum of understanding "merely gave the oil firms consideration...and that the facility could be still be closed if the MOU provisions are violated."

In the MOU, the parties agreed that scaling down the facility's operations is the best way to address city hall's security and development concerns.

But the oil companies were required to shut down several of its tanks, set up a common distribution system and develop a buffer zone around the site.

The source recalled that in the public hearings for the depot's phaseout, the councilors unanimously reached the conclusion that the facility endangers the community because it could not be adequately defended by the police nor the fire authorities from a large fire or a terrorist attack.

The source also added that Mayor Lito Atienza might have scored a point with the signing of the MOU, but at the expense of the councilors.

The council, dominated by Atienza's allies, is expected to approve the agreement through another ordinance that had to undergo another public hearing.

"But it's the councilors, not the mayor, who will now face the music in the next hearing, especially if residents express opposition to the MOU," the source said. "It would be quite difficult to explain our change of hearts."

The alderman also warned that if the council approves the MOU and enacts an amendatory ordinance, "it may be perceived as a mere rubber stamp body."

What's that smell?

By Nelson Forte Flores

PASIG City Mayor Soledad Eusebio urged newly appointed Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando to investigate reports of a foul smell emitted by the Manggahan Material Recovery Facility.

Eusebio said her office has been receiving numerous health-related complaints against the MMDA-run facility. She added that the city government would be forced to close the MMRF should the MMDA fail to take the appropriate steps.

Th MMRF is among three MMDA facilities where Metro Manila's wastes are segregated. The other MRFs are located in Las Piñas and Manila.

Fernando asked Eusebio for more time, saying that he would personally inspect the facility.

Eusebio also asked Fernando to improve the access road to the Rodriguez Sanitary landfill. She said the RSL access road is nothing but a cleared strip of land that becomes muddy whenever it rains. She added that with the onset of the rainy season, the access road would surely become a quagmire of mud.

The 14,000-hectare RSL is located in Sitio Lukutang Munti, Barangay San Isidro, a remote area in the mountainous town of Rodriguez (formerly Montalban).

Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuerpo renewed his call to Metro Manila mayors to use the RSL after learning that a number of local government executives still utilize illegal dumpsites that were constructed at the height of the garbage crisis two years ago.

Abalos orders probe of padded voters' list

By Nelson Forte Flores

COMMISSION on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday ordered an investigation on the reported padding of the voters' list in one of Pasig City's barangays. The order came after re-electionist barangay kagawad, Thelma Dumpit Murillo, filed a complaint before Abalos' office after she discovered that her own home in Barangay Kapitolyo had also been listed as the address of 17 suspected flying voters.

Murillo asked the Comelec to delete 17 names from the list of voters of Precinct 646-A of Barangay Kapitolyo on the ground that they are fictitious. Murillo said that as apartment owner, she knew that "no such persons with such names ever lived or are presently residing in any of our apartment units. Clearly they are fictitious and must be deleted from the voters list to make the scheduled July 15 barangay elections in our community truly meaningful."

Murillo also asked the Comelec to direct the election officer of District I, Pasig City to verify the occupants of her apartment units and to report to the Comelec within 24 hours if such alleged persons were residing in the address.

Wycoco should call Lacson's bluff

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE RELIEF of top-ranking police officials for not being able to stop illegal gambling in their areas may be dramatic. It shows that the present administration will spare no one in its drive against illegal gambling, not even those who have helped install Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the presidency.

It may stop *jueteng* and *masiao* for a while. But only for a while because what has been around for decades, even centuries could not be eradicated.

***

Those who will replace the sacked police officials will also be devoured by a corrupt system that condones accepting bribes from gambling lords. The practice has been there for many, many years.

If the new police officials won't accept bribes from the gambling lords, their subordinates surely will.

I'm reminded of then Lt. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, chief of the defunct Philippine Constabulary and Integrated National Police (INP). Ramos never accepted bribes from *jueteng* and *masiao* operators, but his subordinates did.

***

Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), one of those sacked in the recent purge, never accepted money from *jueteng* financiers. I personally know this.

Even Sen. Panfilo Lacson, when he was still with the Philippine National Police (PNP), I must grudgingly admit, was also not on the take when it came to *jueteng*, because he had other illegal sources of income. But that's another story.

But even though Aglipay and Lacson did not accept bribes from illegal gambling financiers, their subordinates—like Ramos' subordinates—did.

***

The only way to fight illegal gambling is for the government to be practical. It should legalize *jueteng* in Luzon and *masiao* in the Visayas and Mindanao.

If *jueteng* and *masiao* become legal, bribery of local and police officials in areas where the games are being held will disappear. Instead, money spent by gambling lords for bribes would go to the government coffers.

If cockfighting, horseracing and casino gambling have become legal, there's no reason why *jueteng* and *masiao* should remain illegal.

***

Speaking of horseracing, the Philippine Racing Club has a pending application for franchise in Congress.

The PRC is applying to build another racetrack somewhere in Cavite. If the franchise is approved, PRC off-track betting stations will sprout throughout the country.

But even if Congress approves the PRC franchise, chances are President Macapagal-Arroyo will veto it.

***

If the President closed jai alai, there's no reason why she would allow another franchise for horseracing when there are already two existing horseracing franchises. One franchise belongs to the Manila Jockey Club, the other to the PRC.

My spies in Congress say the committee in charge of franchise applications wants the PRC application approved immediately.

The owners of the PRC, my spies say, have already bribed some congressmen with a huge sum for the approval of the franchise application.

Yes, sir, Congress is not called by another name—House of Representa*thieves*—for nothing.

***

If you live in a glass house, don't throw stones at your neighbors.

If Senator Lacson were wise, he would have heeded this injunction. But he didn't, so he's suffering the consequences.

A few weeks after Lacson's camp came up with a "white paper" saying that Director Reynaldo Wycoco of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) had a P100-million mansion in Cabiao, Nueva Ecija, the good senator got a dose of his own medicine. The NBI revealed that he owns two mansions in Ayala Alabang and BF Homes in Parañaque.

***

It turned out that Wycoco doesn't own the mansion; it belongs to his sister, who's married to a wealthy European.

Now, the shoe is on the other foot. It's Lacson's turn to answer questions about his mansions.

***Mahirap talagang maglinis-linisan. Di po ba,* Mr. Senator?**

***

Lacson has gone on the offensive when it came to his mansions.

He admits ownership of those pieces of expensive real estate, but he says they were appraised very high by the NBI.

If Wycoco and Justice Secretary Hernando Perez were interested, they can buy those mansions at half the price the NBI had appraised them, according to Lacson.

***

And if I were Wycoco and Perez, I would readily accept Lacson's bluff. I would buy those pieces of property at the price that the senator is offering for them.

Wycoco and Perez have rich friends who can chip in the money to buy those expensive mansions.

Let's see if Lacson will not cry after those mansions are bought from him at very low prices.

***

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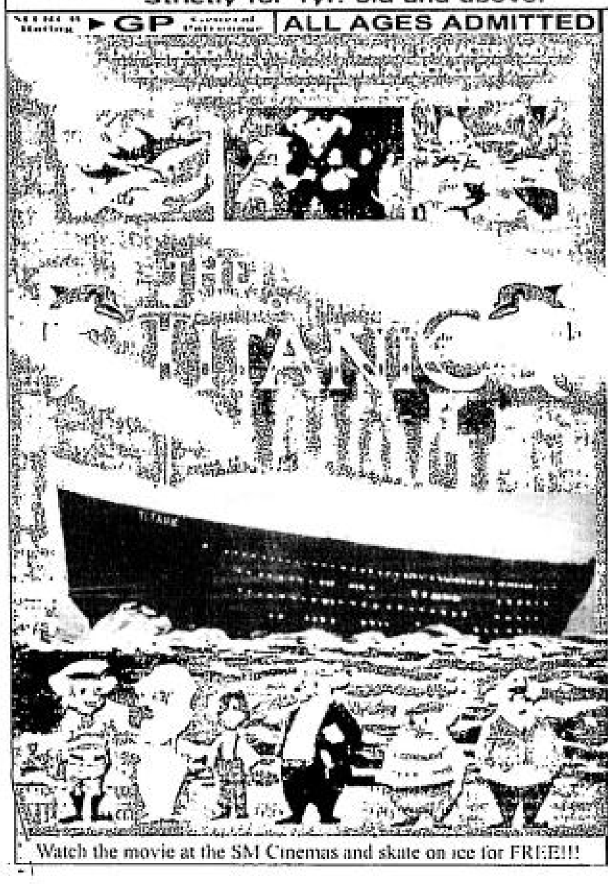

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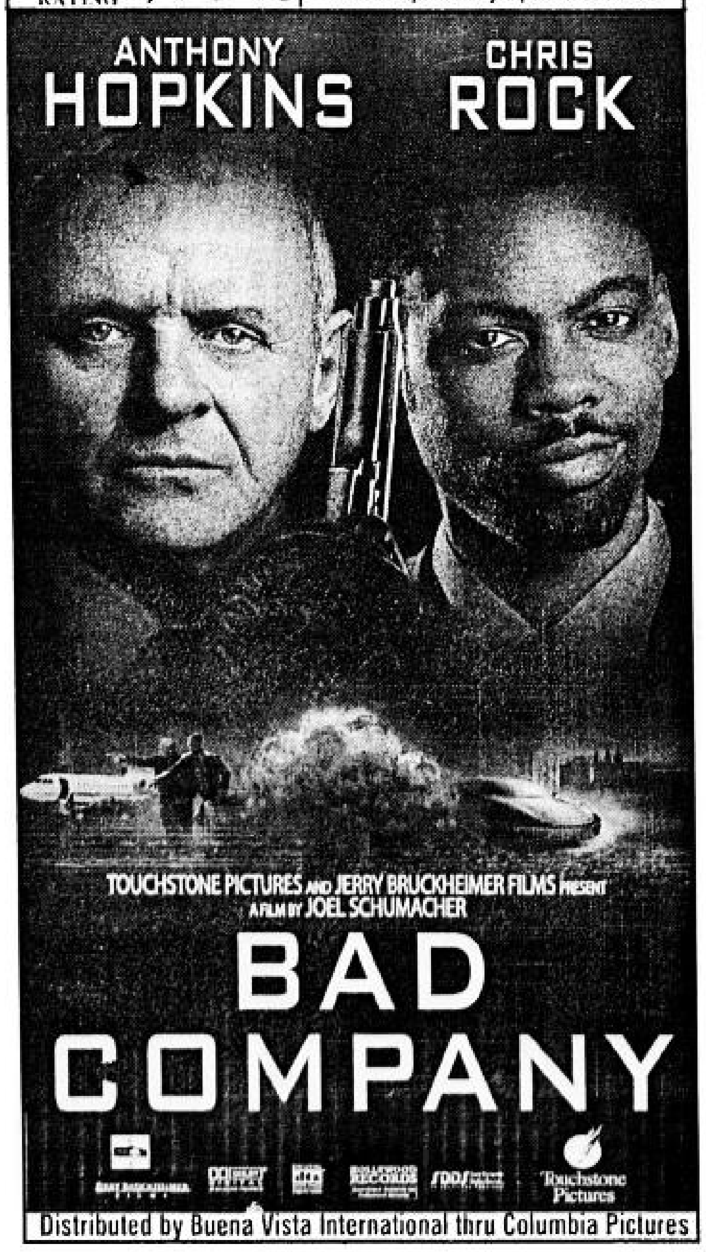
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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	SCOOBY DOO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	A WALK TO REMEMBER
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	TAMPISAW
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	MINORITY REPORT
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	KASIBULAN / TEMPTATION NIGHT
ODEON	MINORITY REPORT
ODEON-2	DISKARTE
ROBEN	TAMPISAW
TANDEM-1	MAMASAN
TANDEM-2	MONSTER'S BALL
TIMES	COLLATERAL DAMAGE / MIMIC-2

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	TAMPISAW
REMAR	MINORITY REPORT
REMAR-2	TAMPISAW

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	FOREVERMORE
B	TAMPISAW
C	SUPER B

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	AMELIE
CINEMA-2	MINORITY REPORT

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DISKARTE
CINEMA-2	TAMPISAW
CINEMA-3	FOREVERMORE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MINORITY REPORT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	FOREVERMORE
CINEMA-6	MONSTER'S BALL
CINEMA-7	MAGKAPATID
CINEMA-8	A WALK TO REMEMBER
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MINORITY REPORT
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MINORITY REPORT
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	SCOOBY DOO
CINEMA-12	SUM OF ALL FEARS
CINEMA-14	AMELIE
CINEMA-15	FOREVERMORE

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	MINORITY REPORT
CINEMA-2	SCOOBY DOO
CINEMA-3	SUM OF ALL FEARS
CINEMA-4	MINORITY REPORT
CINEMA-5	FOREVERMORE
CINEMA-6	MINORITY REPORT

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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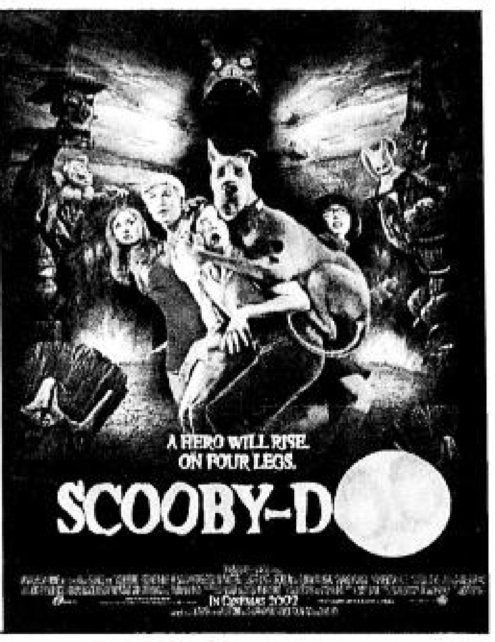


Discover ArtFilm GREENBELT 1

DARING, AWARD-WINNING, EXTRAORDINARY

IRIS: A Memoir of Iris Murdoch, July 3-9
Judi Dench, Jim Broadbent, Kate Winslet
A real-life story of the enduring love between Iris Murdoch and her husband John Bayley, which lasts throughout her struggles against Alzheimer's disease.
Best Supporting Actor (Broadbent), 74th Annual Academy Awards; Best Actress (Dench), 2001 British Academy Film Awards; Best Supporting Actress (Winslet), 2001 L.A. Film Critics Association
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)

The King is Alive, July 10 -16
Miles Anderson, Romane Bohringer, David Bradley & Jennifer Jason Leigh
Eleven bus passengers take shelter from the elements in an abandoned desert town. As rescue grows more remote by the day an idea emerges: why not stage a play? However, the choice of King Lear plunges this disparate group of travelers into turmoil as they struggle to overcome nature's wrath and their own mortality.
Best Actress (Leigh), 2000 Tokyo International Film Festival
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)

Storytelling, July 17 - 23
Selma Blair, Leo Fitzpatrick, Paul Giamatti, John Goodman, Julie Hagerty Directed by Todd Solondz
Storytelling plays between fantasy and reality. The first part, "Fiction,"observes creative writing students and their amorous adventures. In the second, "Nonfiction, "an aspiring documentary filmmaker follows the ups and mostly downs of a dysfunctional suburban family.
Official Selection, New York Film Festival and Cannes Film Festival.
MTRCB Rating: To be determined

The Yin-Yang Master, July 24-30
Mansai Nomura, Hideaki Ito, Hiroyuki Sanada, Kyoko Koizumi, Eriko Emai. Directed by Yojiro Takita
Two noble families compete for the emperor's favors. In their quest for power, they enlist the Yin-Yang Masters, Seimei and Doson. But an unforseen evil takes hold of Doson who now wants the emperor's throne for himself. It will be up to Seimei to stop him.
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

AYALA CINEMAS

MTRCB RATING PG – 13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
Against bringing children below 13 yrs., some themes and scenes may prove too sensitive for younger audiences.

CRIME CAN BE PREDICTED,
THE GUILTY ARRESTED BEFORE THE LAW IS BROKEN,
THE SYSTEM WAS NEVER WRONG,
UNTIL IT CAME AFTER HIM.
TOM CRUISE
A STEVEN SPIELBERG FILM
MINORITY REPORT
PRECRIME

Special thanks to NOKIA

NOW SHOWING

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Hong Kong pop idol injured in car crash

HONG KONG—Hong Kong Canto-pop star Nicholas Tse was in serious condition in hospital Saturday after being involved in a car crash.

Tse was travelling along a highway on outlying Lantau island with a friend toward Chek Lap Kok airport when the collision with another car took place early Saturday.

The crash left the front of his blue Audi estate in a twisted mess.

Two other people and Tse's friend were also injured and taken to hospital, local Cable TV reported.

A hospital spokesperson was not immediately available for comment.

The car crash was the latest incident in Tse's turbulent career, which has been marred in controversy since he exploded onto the Canto-pop scene in 1997.

Earlier this month, Tse and police constable Lau Chi-wai, 28, were charged by the Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) of perverting the course of justice by allowing a third man, Shing Kwok-ting, to falsely present himself as the driver of Tse's Ferrari F360 Modena when it crashed on March 23.

Shing, a former chauffeur for the Emperor Entertainment group, pleaded guilty in April to one count of conspiracy and was sentenced to four months imprisonment.

During Shing's trial, the court heard the ex-chauffeur had been asleep at his Kowloon home when Tse called to inform him of the accident in central Hong Kong.

Shing had allegedly advised Tse to abandon the scene and decided to handle the matter himself.

He drove a car out to the accident site and asked Lau, who was one of the police officers inspecting the crash, if he could "stand in" as the Ferrari's driver. Lau allegedly agreed to the request.

Shing had subsequently made a false statement that he was the driver of the black sports car when it lost control and careered into safety barriers, ripping of the vehicle's back.

Son of 1960s movie star Patrick Tse Yin, Nicholas was ranked earlier this year as Hong Kong's top male idol. He is constant gossip column fodder thanks to his bad temper, liaisons with starlets and love of fast cars. *AFP*

US couple sues makers of Star Wars video game after son has seizure

TAMPA, Florida—A Florida couple have filed a lawsuit claiming a Star Wars video game caused their 16-year-old son to have a seizure.

Jimmy and Rosemary Zummo, of Tampa Florida, are seeking at least $15,000 in damages for emotional distress and medical expenses, in their suit against LucasArts Entertainment and Sony Computer Entertainment America.

They claim their son Dominic had a seizure in July 2000 while playing the "Star Wars: Episode I Jedi Power Battles" video game.

The lawsuit alleges the teenager's seizure was caused by "fast-paced screen changes, bright screens, flickering patterns, lighting changes, and what is commonly termed 'the strobe effect.'" *AFP*

Red blacks out 'garbage'

By Marinel R. Cruz

"IF YOU don't like it, then it's not for you."

That is what new director Jon Red tells critics of his first full-length movie, "Utang ni Tatang."

As far as the man is concerned, the artist in him makes his own rules and does not expect everyone to follow them. Leaving an impression—negative or positive—is enough.

"Utang" is Red's first full-length feature for World Arts Cinema and was an official entry to the recent Manila Film Festival.

Straight from the mouth of its director, "Utang" is about the journey of Mike and his gang in search of a mysterious man they call Tatang (Jaime Fabregas). The 100-minute movie concerns not what the "utang" is but its effect on the lives of the characters. Several days after the movie opened in theaters, newspaper reviews came out mostly criticizing Red's unorthodox direction. The movie's characters, they said, were unconvincing, Red has yet to get out of the shadow of his younger brother Raymond, etc.

"If you don't like it, then it's not for you," Red repeated. "Just as I hate musicals but was greatly impressed when a recent musical film blew my mind. The important thing is to be open and not (to) live in a box as others do."

He argues that the "competition is really within me," and he does not mind being in the shadow of his equally talented brother.

The new director is wary of the negative publicity the movie has received and how this might affect local viewers. He says he is also worried about how some people would judge experimental works like "Utang ni Tatang" in general.

Red does understand that viewers used to the usual Filipino film fare might not initially appreciate his work. "Part of my crusade is to open the audience's mind," Red told the INQUIRER. "Most moviegoers have been slaves of formula films and all the garbage that we see.

FREEDOM MAN. Jon Red points to a new direction for Filipino filmmaking.

JOHNNY VILLENA

World Arts Cinema gave me relatively complete creative freedom."

Red, 38, took up fine arts at the University of the Philippines in Diliman. He had prior lessons in painting at the Philippine High School for the Arts at Mt. Makiling in Los Baños, Laguna. From painting, he shifted to filmmaking after he played the lead role in his brother's short film, "Ang Magpakailan Man," about a young scientist who discovers a book and a potion that would give him eternal life.

He says he is inspired by the works of Woody Allen, Martin Scorsese and Charlie Chaplin. He also finds brilliance in the works of Mike de Leon, particularly "Kisapmata," "Itim" and "Batch '81."

His own first experimental work, "Es," won the special jury prize in the Mondiale dela Video in Brussels, Belgium.

Two years ago, he made his first full-length digital film, "Still Lives," a 90-minute experimental film on the havoc that the shabu problem has wrought on society. The Singapore Film Festival awarded it a citation for pioneering the use of digital film.

The "Still Lives" stars Joel Torre, Ynes Veneracion, Allan Paule, Noni Buencamino, Caridad Sanchez and the late Rey Ventura.

According to Red, digital movies are less expensive to make than those in the conventional 16mm or 35mm format. Digital filmmaking provides greater access to an audience hungry for different kinds of films. "Now we have a medium for our wild ideas that movie producers won't support," he said.

The director tells film enthusiasts to expect more independent films like "Utang ni Tatang" from him. He believes that independent filmmaking will help revive the ailing local film industry.

He says that unlike commercial films, whose makers have enough funds to buy whatever they need, independent filmmakers solve problems by maximizing whatever resources they have. "Utang ni Tatang," for instance, was shot for only 10 days and used one house for three different scenes.

"*Grabe ang milagrong nangyari dito sa pelikulang ito,*" Red shared.

There is still hope for Philippine cinema, he says, as long as there are people still passionate and willing to help solve the problem.

"One hundred years ago in Europe, painters were lambasted for distorting images in their works," he said. "(We) can't afford to wait a hundred years. We have to be progressive. The place is here and the time is now."

"Utang ni Tatang" will have a special screening at the UP Film Center in Diliman, Quezon City, on July 31 at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are P40 each.

Joel Torre, Jeffrey Quizon, Tado, Ronnie Lazaro and Dodos de la Cruz play the men in the gang.

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED

JUST VISITING

Fun and fantasy for the whole family!

'Just Visiting' opens tomorrow !

When a wizard uses a flawed time-travel potion and bungles his magic spell, a noble knight, Count Thibault, and his clumsy servant, Andre, find themselves transported from 12th century medieval France to 21st century modern-day Chicago!

Confused, lost and overwhelmed, the pair meets hilarious misadventures with automobiles, electricity and indoor plumbing. They enlist the help of Thibault's descendant Julia Malfete as they find their way back to their own time, armed with the timeless values of honor and courage.

Based on a phenomenal box office hit in France, JUST VISITING is a heartwarming comedy adventure for the entire family. Loaded with special effects and laugh-out-loud comic moments, JUST VISITING is a movie-going treat for all ages.

JUST VISITING stars Jean Reno, Christina Applegate and Christian Clavier, and is directed by Jean-Marie Gaubert from a screenplay by Clavier & Jean-Marie Poire & John Hughes.

Dogs as man's helpmeets

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

DOGS aren't only man's best friends, they can also be our helpmeets. This is the fascinating premise of the popular National Geographic Channel program, "Dogs with Jobs," which launches its third season on NGC on July 3, with telecasts every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

On July 3, meet Elite, a Spanish water dog that used to be an abused pet but is now a contender in agility competitions. Also featured are Valen, a Nova Scotia duck-tolling retriever, who works with disabled children in Ottawa, and Tracker, a beagle who can detect termite infestations long before there's any visible evidence, saving homeowners millions of dollars.

On July 10, the first featured dog is Peek, a little Papillon, who does chores for its wheelchair-bound owner. From her lap, Peek activates elevator buttons, light switches and power door openers!

Next, Canaan, a lead Bouvier des Flanders, herds emus to pasture, protects them from coyotes, and hunts for the eggs they lay under leaves and straw.

Finally, Willy patrols the Plaza Cataluna metro station in downtown Barcelona to deter people from jumping the turnstiles and selling things illegally.

On July 17, Jack flies through the air in a Superman costume in the halftime shows his owner Bill stages at college and professional sporting events.

Beau is a Dalmatian in training to become a therapy dog for an old folks' home. Rescued from the Second Chance Shelter, Beau is being trained by prison inmates.

And Dar is a German shepherd that works with the Texas Department of Insurance. The gifted dog needs to pass a tough exam each year to keep the job!

And on July 24, the featured canine workers are: Kilu, a Catalan sheepdog that herds sheep in the Spanish Pyrenees, keeping them from falling off mountainsides and running into speeding cars.

Turbeaux, a Mondio ring sport champion, competes in the little-known sport by climbing walls, jumping hurdles and protecting his handler from attack.

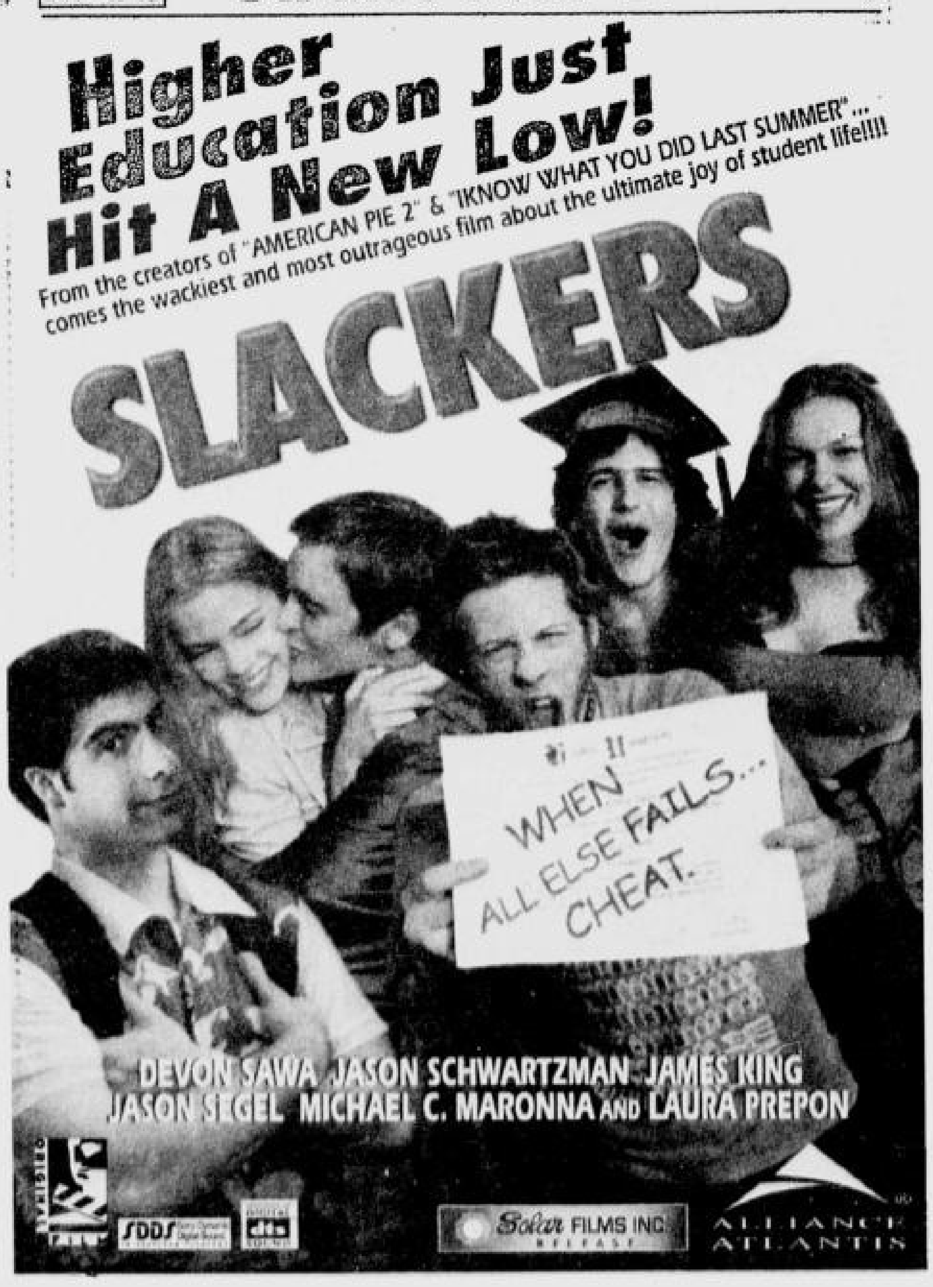
And Ruby is an eight-year-old Rottweiler that helps its owner promote the sport of Dog Scootering as it pulls her around the city.

These and other features on bright and hardworking dogs have a strong positive impact on viewers, who realize that canines are more than just pets, and can in fact be of service in many ways to the communities in which they live.

The hope is that, as dogs are shown in this more active and helpful light, viewers will regard them with greater respect and admiration, and stop treating their own canine pets shabbily.

DIS YIR, UR FAVORYT LESSON STARTS JULY 3!

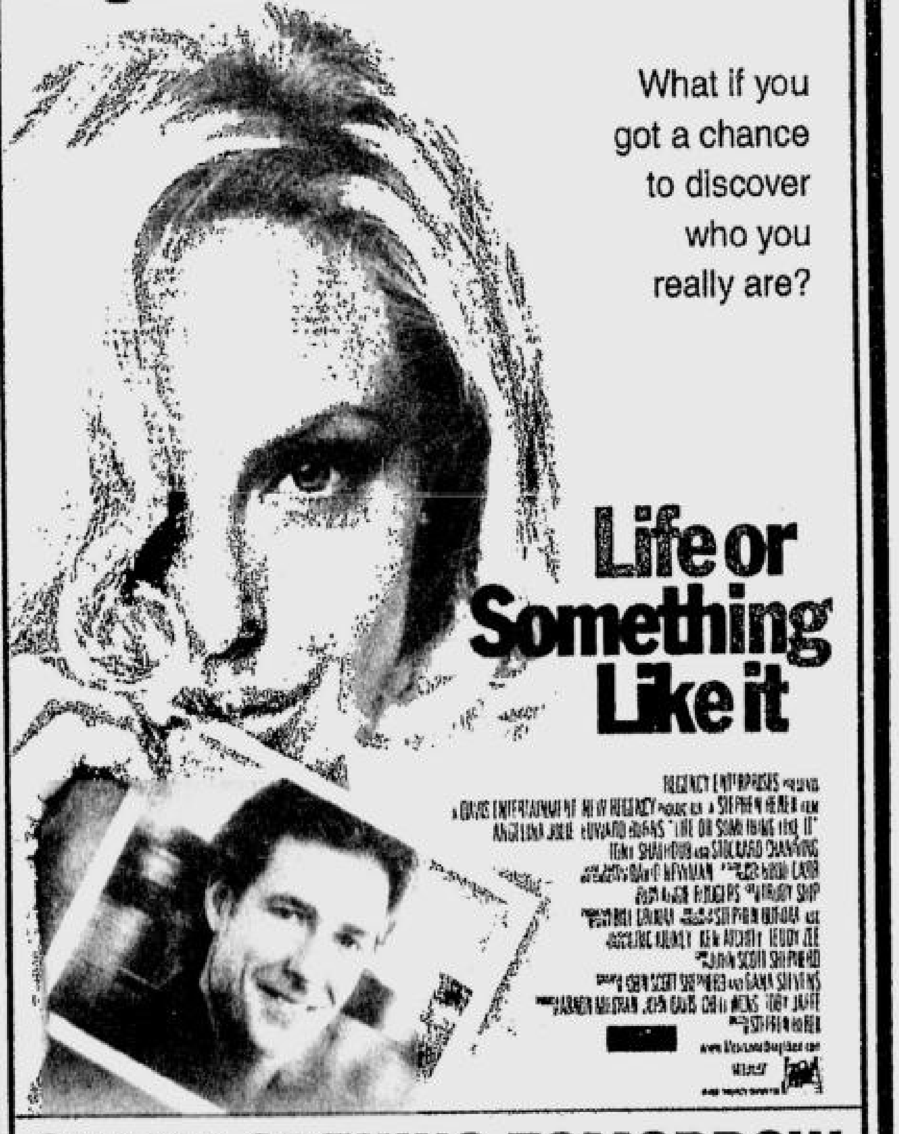
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18



Higher Education Just Hit A New Low!
From the creators of "AMERICAN PIE 2" & "I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMMER"... comes the wackiest and most outrageous film about the ultimate joy of student life!!!
SLACKERS
WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS... CHEAT.
DEVON SAWA JASON SCHWARTZMAN JAMES KING
JASON SEGEL MICHAEL C. MARONNA AND LAURA PREPON
Solar FILMS INC. RELEASE
ALLIANCE ATLANTIS

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

Angelina Jolie Edward Burns

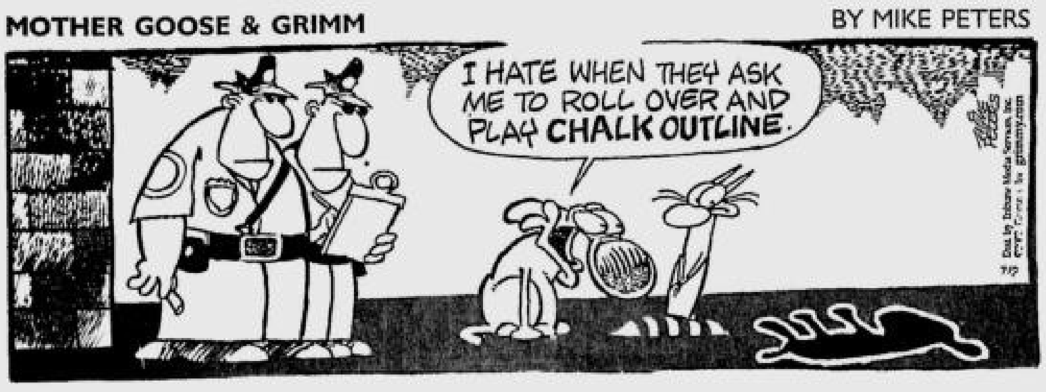


What if you got a chance to discover who you really are?
Life or Something Like it

GRAND OPENING TOMORROW

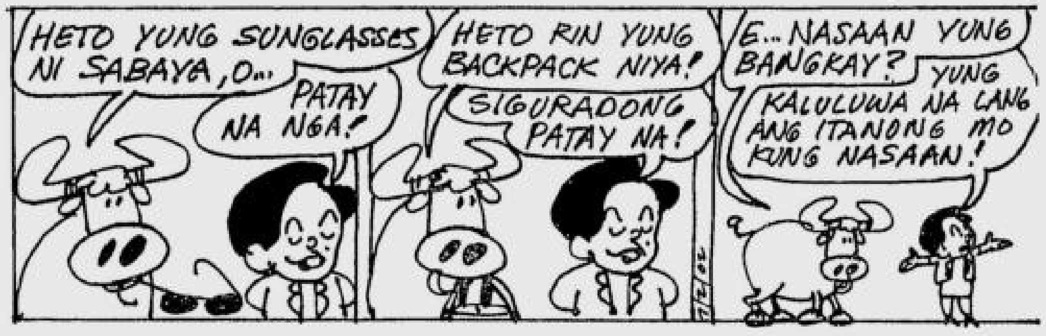
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


I HATE WHEN THEY ASK ME TO ROLL OVER AND PLAY CHALK OUTLINE.
7/2

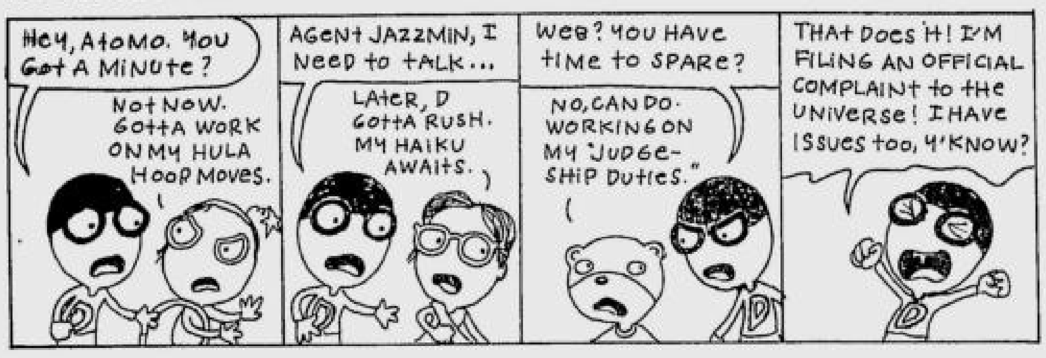
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HETO YUNG SUNGLASSES NI SABAYA, O...
PATAY NA NGA!
HETO RIN YUNG BACKPACK NIYA!
SIGURADONG PATAY NA!
E... NASAAN YUNG BANGKAY?
YUNG KALULUWA NA LANG ANG ITANONG MO KUNG NASAAN!
7/2/02

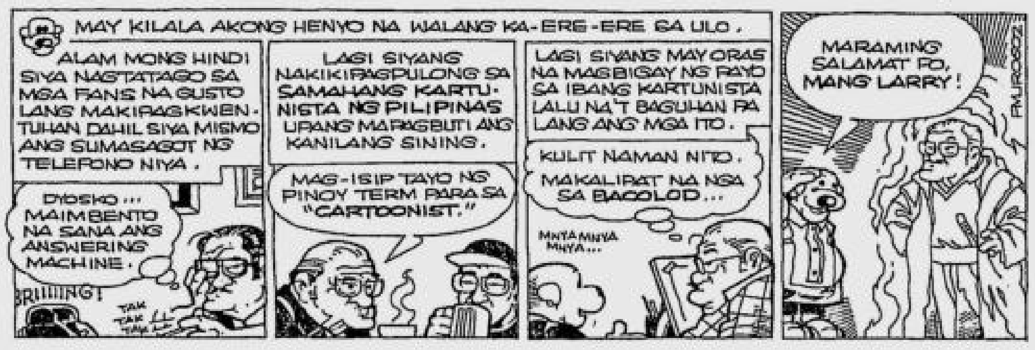
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, AtoMo. You Got A MiNute?
Not Now. Gotta work on My hula Hoop Moves.
AGent JAZZMIN, I Need to talk...
Later, D Gotta Rush. My haiku awaits.
Web? You have time to spare?
No, can do. Working on my "Judgeship duties."
That does it! I'M Filing an official complaint to the universe! I have issues too, y'know?

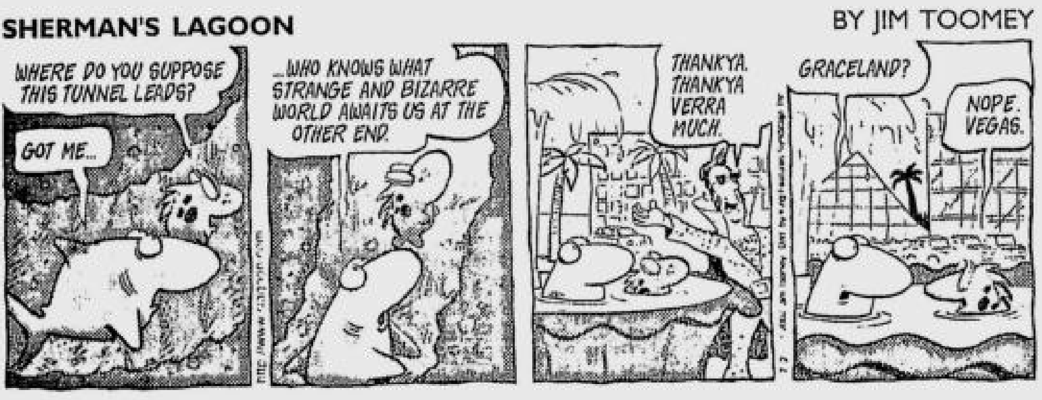
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAY KILALA AKONG HENYO NA WALANG KA-ERE-ERE SA ULO.
ALAM MONG HINDI SIYA NAGTATAGO SA MGA FANS NA GUSTO LANG MAKIPAGKWENTUHAN DAHIL SIYA MISMO ANG SUMASAGOT NG TELEFONO NIYA.
DYOSKO... MAIMBENTO NA SANA ANG ANSWERING MACHINE.
BRIIIING!
TAK TAK LL TAK
LAGI SIYANG NAKIKIPAGPULONG SA SAMAHANG KARTUNISTA NG PILIPINAS UPANG MAPAGBUTI ANG KANILANG SINING.
MAG-ISIP TAYO NG PINOY TERM PARA SA "CARTOONIST."
LAGI SIYANG MAY ORAS NA MAGBIGAY NG PAYO SA IBANG KARTUNISTA LALU NA'T BAGUHAN PA LANG ANG MGA ITO.
KULIT NAMAN NITO.
MAKALIPAT NA NGA SA BACOLOD...
MNYA MNYA MNYA...
MARAMING SALAMAT PO, MANG LARRY!
P.M.JR2002

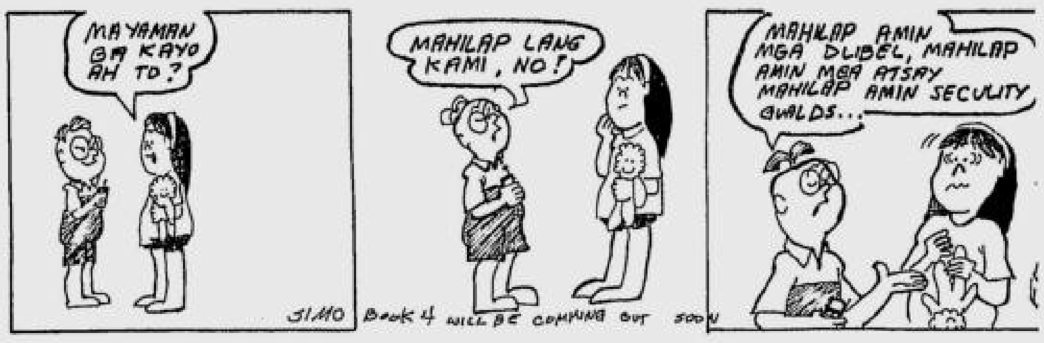
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WHERE DO YOU SUPPOSE THIS TUNNEL LEADS?
GOT ME...
...WHO KNOWS WHAT STRANGE AND BIZARRE WORLD AWAITS US AT THE OTHER END.
THANKYA. THANKYA VERRA MUCH.
GRACELAND?
NOPE. VEGAS.

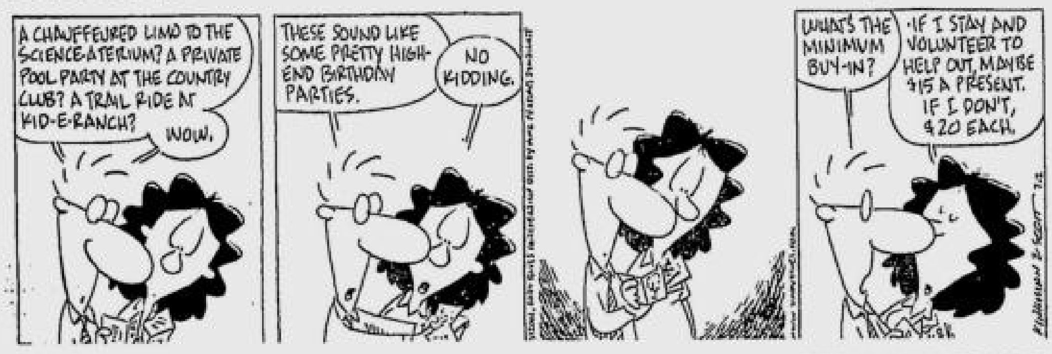
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


MAYAMAN BA KAYO AH TO?
MAHILAP LANG KAMI, NO!
MAHILAP AMIN MGA DLIBEL, MAHILAP AMIN MGA ATSAY MAHILAP AMIN SECULITY GUALDS...
SIMO Book 4 will be comming out soon

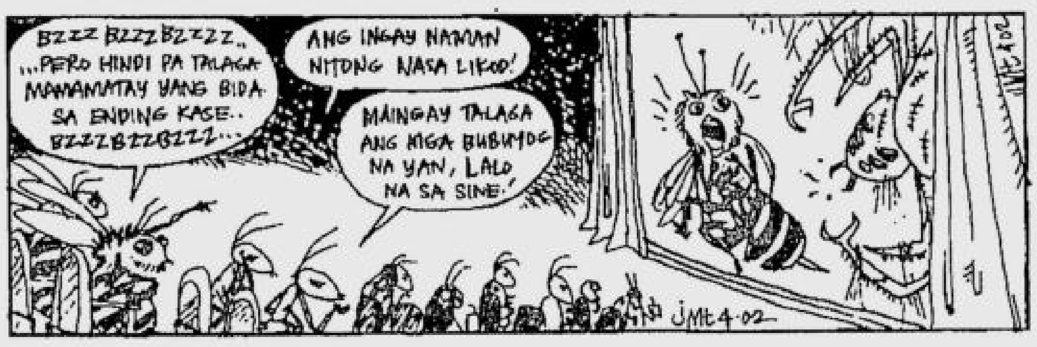
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


A CHAUFFEURED LIMO TO THE SCIENCE-ATERIUM? A PRIVATE POOL PARTY AT THE COUNTRY CLUB? A TRAIL RIDE AT KID-E-RANCH?
WOW.
THESE SOUND LIKE SOME PRETTY HIGH-END BIRTHDAY PARTIES.
NO KIDDING.
WHAT'S THE MINIMUM BUY-IN?
IF I STAY AND VOLUNTEER TO HELP OUT, MAYBE $15 A PRESENT. IF I DON'T, $20 EACH.

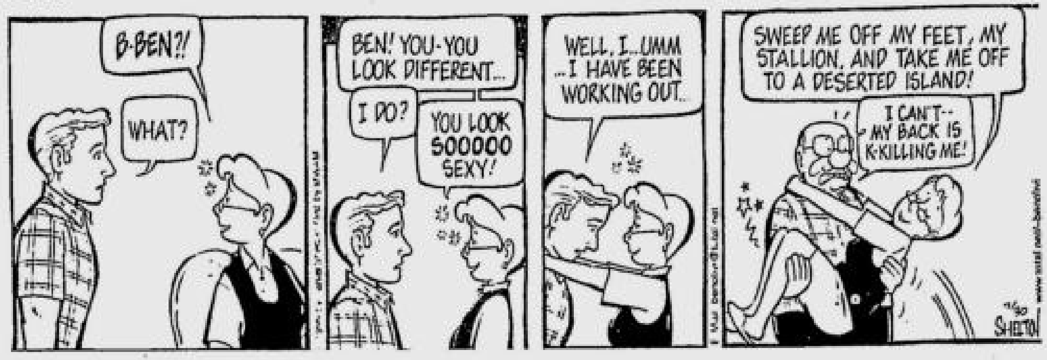
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BZZZ BZZZBZZZZ.. ...PERO HINDI PA TALAGA MAMAMATAY YANG BIDA SA ENDING KASE.. BZZZBZZBZZZ...
ANG INGAY NAMAN NITONG NASA LIKOD!
MAINGAY TALAGA ANG MGA BUBUYOG NA YAN, LALO NA SA SINE!
JMT 4-02

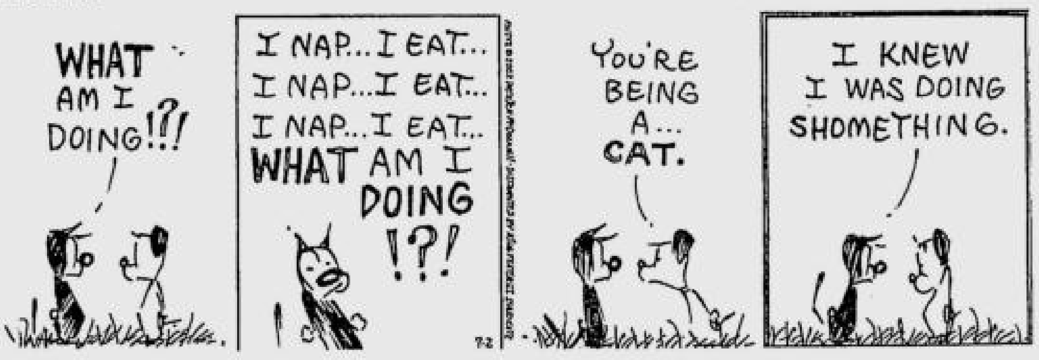
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


B-BEN?!
WHAT?
BEN! YOU-YOU LOOK DIFFERENT...
I DO?
YOU LOOK SOOOOO SEXY!
WELL, I...UMM ...I HAVE BEEN WORKING OUT...
SWEEP ME OFF MY FEET, MY STALLION, AND TAKE ME OFF TO A DESERTED ISLAND!
I CAN'T-- MY BACK IS K-KILLING ME!
SHELTON

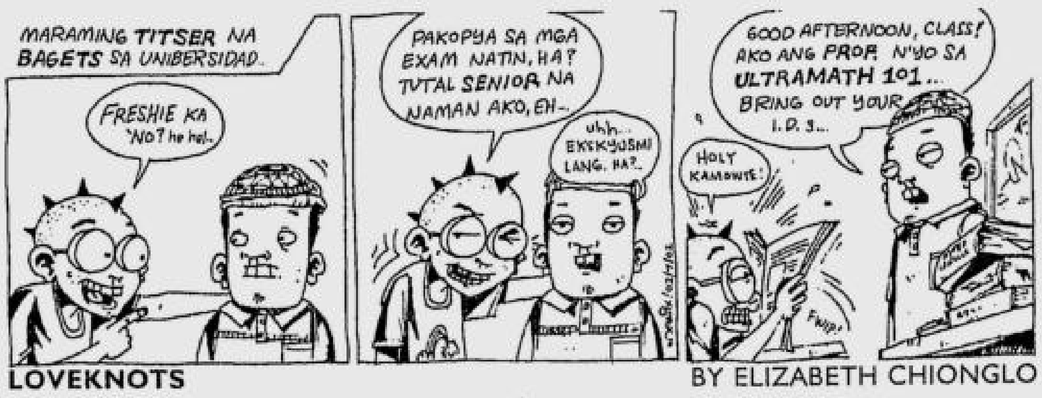
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT AM I DOING!?!
I NAP...I EAT... I NAP...I EAT... I NAP...I EAT... WHAT AM I DOING !?!
7-2
YOU'RE BEING A... CAT.
I KNEW I WAS DOING SHOMETHING.

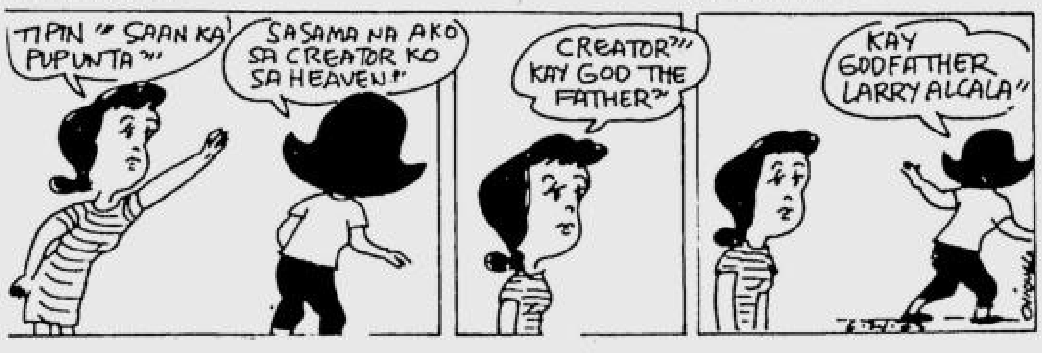
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


MARAMING TITSER NA BAGETS SA UNIBERSIDAD...
FRESHIE KA 'NO? he he!..
PAKOPYA SA MGA EXAM NATIN, HA? TUTAL SENIOR NA NAMAN AKO, EH...
uhh... EKSKYUSMI LANG, HA?..
GOOD AFTERNOON, CLASS! AKO ANG PROF. N'YO SA ULTRAMATH 101... BRING OUT YOUR I.D.s...
HOLY KAMOTE!
FWIP!

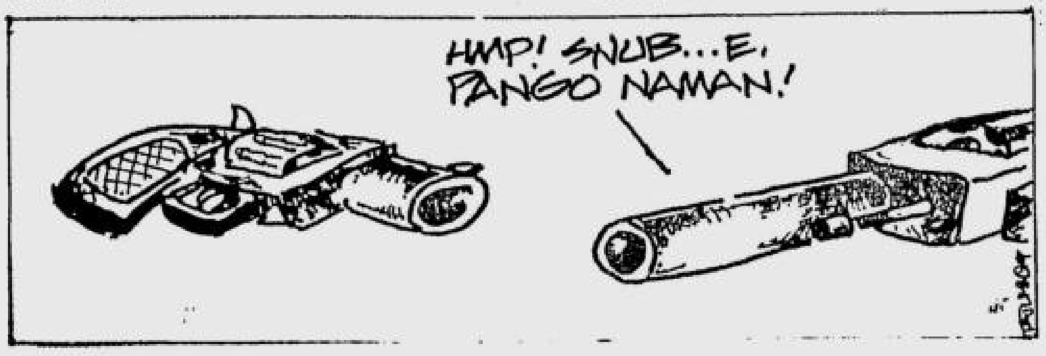
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


TIPIN "SAAN KA PUPUNTA?"
SASAMA NA AKO SA CREATOR KO SA HEAVEN!
CREATOR?" KAY GOD THE FATHER?"
KAY GODFATHER LARRY ALCALA"
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


HMP! SNUB...E, PANGO NAMAN!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dan Rowan, Jerry Hall, Paul Williams, Richard Petty

Happy Birthday: You will be in the mood to learn and expand your horizons. Your changing philosophy is opening your eyes to new and unusual lifestyles. Educational pursuits started this year will pay off. Travel will be to your advantage. Don't push your beliefs on others and don't take on someone else's beliefs. Your numbers are 3, 18, 23, 32, 36, 48

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will feel anxious today if you don't keep busy. Being pushy will get you into trouble. You will have to go easy on others if you want to get along.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will be prone to minor accidents if you are careless. Take care of the little odds and ends yourself and prepare for what you want to accomplish later in the week.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't believe everything you hear especially if it has to do with professional or financial possibilities. Don't get involved in fast-cash schemes.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Stay calm and don't let anyone see how upset you are about what's going on around you. Don't let others influence your decisions. You have to think for yourself if you want to get ahead.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Traveling for business will be to your benefit in more ways than one. You will come into contact with interesting people who can make a difference in the way you do things in the future.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Someone may try to take advantage of you today. Don't contribute money to an organization that is bullying you. Donate your time because you believe in the cause.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't take what others say to heart. You are likely to misread what someone is trying to tell you. Focus on positive interaction.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You should work at mastering your skills and moving into a lead position in your chosen field. Put your talent out there for everyone to see. You will be in a high creative cycle.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Opportunities for romance will unfold through friends, relatives or neighbors. Use your ingenuity and you will find yourself in the spotlight gaining popularity.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You may want to keep your thoughts to yourself today. Someone is likely to take you the wrong way or overreact to what you say. Expect problems to develop at home but everything will dissipate as the week unfolds.

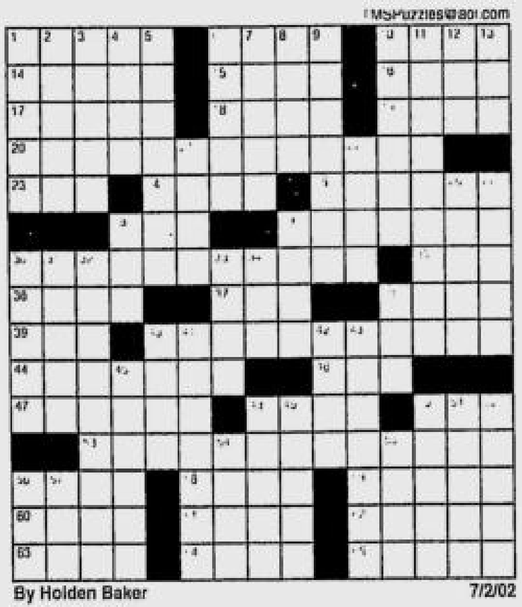
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Family and friends will be there for you if you talk about your feelings and your concerns. Someone you work with should not be trusted to do as you ask. You may have to cover for a lazy individual.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may be tempted to go out and have fun while neglecting your responsibilities. You had better get up early and tidy up loose ends first or you won't enjoy your day as much as you want.

Birthday Baby: You will learn with little prompting. You will be interested in the workings of electrical devices, airplanes, X-rays, radio waves and you will always want to take things apart

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



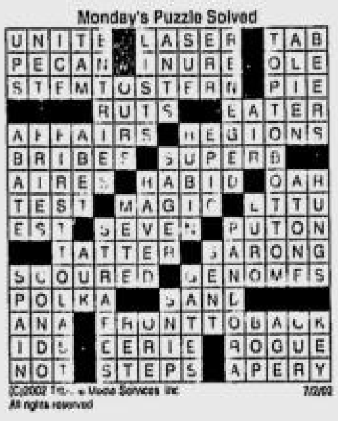
By Holden Baker
Greenfield, MA

7/2/02

ACROSS
1 Car lifts
6 Dogpatch creator
10 TV's talking horse
14 Musical key
15 Cookie choice
16 Architect Saarinen
17 Sharon or Oliver
18 Repast
19 Bridge
20 Monroe/Ewell movie
23 Before, to Shelley
24 Camp beds
25 Jeweled headdresses
28 Swine
29 Plunder
30 MacLaine movie
35 Unhappy
36 Light gas
37 Possess
38 Gala celebration
39 Cleveland pro
40 Director of 20A, 30A and 53A
44 Sustenance
46 Frigid
47 Defames
48 Ankara resident
50 GE acquisition in 1986
53 Monroe/Curtis movie
56 One opposed
58 "I Know How He Feels" singer
59 Eat away
60 Pod contents
61 Equal scores
62 Opposing teams
63 Ernie's buddy
64 Glut
65 Drinker's salute

DOWN
1 James or Jackson
2 Following
3 Garlic unit
4 "Citizen
5 Lettering device
6 Hale-Bopp, e.g.
7 Zones
8 Anjou or Bosc
9 Judicious
10 Agave drink
11 Put into different words
12 Time of note
13 Put on
21 Hindu exercise discipline
22 Mosaic piece
26 Marble material
27 Passover meal
28 Criticize harshly
29 Undersized
30 Ancient Peruvians
31 Kingdom
32 Matinee idol
33 Blockhead
34 Nocturnal hunter
38 Soar
40 Shoulder of the road
42 Cable
43 Most gunky
45 Red Guard member
48 Lhasa land
49 Czar's decree
50 Valerie Harper role
52 Alamogordo event
54 Han Solo's girlfriend
55 Small group
56 Police call letters

Monday's Puzzle Solved



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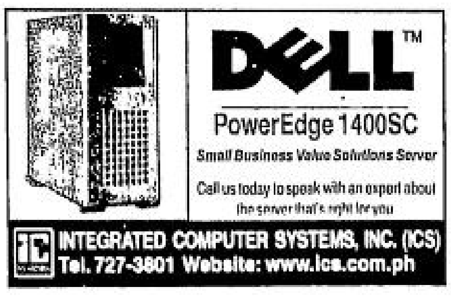
7/2/02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TUESDAY,
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BUSINESS
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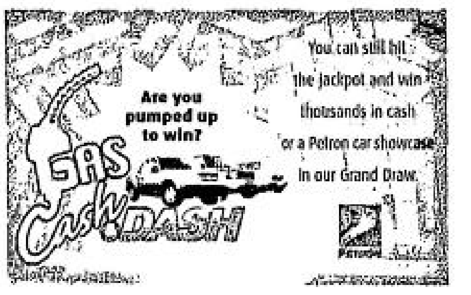
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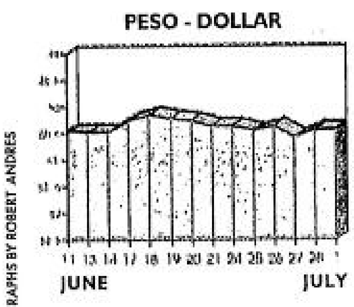

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As of 5 p.m., July 1, 2002

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As of 5 p.m., July 1, 2002

GOLD: $319.30/319.80
per ounce Hong Kong, June 28, 2002

STOCK MARKET

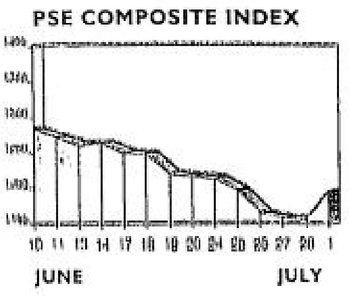
Stocks up 3.37%

STOCKS, led by Ayala group firms, ended a four-day losing streak yesterday to close 3.37 percent higher as bargain-hunters scoured the market for oversold blue-chips.

The main index ended up 39.02 points at 1,195.37 points, on volume of P274.2 million.

Forty stocks rose, 12 declined and 28 were unchanged.

STOCKS/ B2



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Freeze on new credit cards eyed as soured loans surge

By Clarissa S. Batino

SOURED credit card loans have ballooned to nearly half of the banking system's P47.093 billion in receivables in the first quarter, prompting the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to consider stopping the issuance of new credit cards.

"The rising past-due loans from credit cards are already a cause of concern and the Monetary Board has instructed us to propose new measures and possibly put a stop to the indiscriminate issuance of credit cards," BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said yesterday.

As of the first quarter, the past-due credit card loans went up to 47.76 percent of the total receivables from 21.6 percent of P47.614 billion in receivables during the fourth quarter of 2001. This was despite the drop by P667 million or by 1.4 percent of the banks' credit card exposure in the first quarter from the previous three-month period.

Currently, 17 big banks and 11 thrift banks are engaged in the credit card business mostly through tie-ups with big names like Mastercard, Visa and Diners.

Reyes said the past-due portion should only range between 15 to 17 percent, comparable to the non-performing loan ratio of commercial banks that stood at 18.23 percent as of April.

"Due to the high level of past dues, we may ask them to suspend the issuance of new cards. We will come up with a more detailed report in two weeks and the Monetary Board would decide what measures to impose," said the deputy governor in charge of bank supervision and examination.

Reyes said that among the measures being proposed was to increase the provisioning requirement on the credit card loans. "We have to be stricter on these loans because they are clean or without collateral," he stressed.

Foreign banks normally put a 400-percent provisioning for the credit card loans because after 90 days, they usually write off the unpaid debts. Reyes said local banks allow for a longer reckoning period stretching from 90 to 180 days.

Also being planned is a moratorium on the authority of banks to put up a separate credit card subsidiary as well as to regulate the franchising agreement between banks and credit card firms.

"We could regulate these practices and ask banks to renew their tie-ups on a yearly basis. We have to know where the problem lies, whether it is with the banks or because of the conditions imposed by the tie-up," Reyes said.

The central bank official noted that proper credit investigation, a practice now loosely applied by lenders because of competition, was still the key to prudent banking operations.

It was barely a month ago when the BSP warned banks to start reducing their credit card charges otherwise it may have to push the Bankers Association of the Philippines to impose a cap on their rates similar to the ceiling on lending charges.

Reyes said the central bank, as much as possible, would like to steer clear from tightening the regulations on areas that were already liberalized in the past like

FREEZE/ B2

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BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

QUITE frankly, even as we speak, a good number of people are trying to cope with a big disappointment. They are those who only expect the worst to happen.

Even in the best of times, some people always succeed in feeling down. Now I don't know if you can think of something worse than the end of the world.

Yet there are always some people who think that the end of the world is near. When the world does not end, of course, they are terribly disappointed.

A newsman friend of mine estimates those eternal pessimists to be one-fifth of humanity. He apparently based his figure on a recent survey.

The survey said that 19 percent of Filipinos see no future in their country, and they want to leave for abroad. If I still know my gardening, 19 percent is almost one-fifth.

Thus, those 19 percent of "desperate" Filipinos figure out. They're what's known in dressmaking as "constant." They are forever unhappy—no matter what—but at least they are unhappy together!

* * *

WHAT the survey wanted to tell us is hard to figure out, even with my deep knowledge of gardening and dressmaking. I don't think it's a survey just for survey's sake.

Still, whatever questions it intended to answer, the survey only succeeded in creating more questions. Like, if 19 percent want to leave, who will carry their suitcase?

At the moment, more than 10 percent of Filipinos, those born and bred in this country, are working overseas. Again, that's 10 percent—at any given time.

Surely, some of the remaining 90 percent here want to work overseas, but for one reason or another, they just cannot. They must be among the 19 percent "desperate" ones.

Yet there could be a lot of reasons why they are here. The spouse is the jealous type. Like Joey Marquez, according to Kris Aquino. Joey wanted her to stop working.

Whatever its purpose, moreover, the survey had no comparative figures for three, four years ago. It can't say if the pessimists are increasing.

Thus, even with the survey, we still do not know how many people are disappointed today that the world insisted on not ending yesterday.

* * *

IN business, nevertheless, you can feel a growing frustration over the surge of importation. Another word for it is "globalization."

They say imports are forcing local firms to close down. More and more people thus are losing their jobs. Time will come we will just import everything.

Thus the business community even tried to revive the Buy Pinoy Movement. As always, nothing happened. The movement died again as soon as it was resurrected.

The movement is set aside for now, since things are starting to look up in manufacturing. The NSO said, in April, the sector grew by almost 15 percent.

Now that is big. Based on my unique investigative news gathering, in which I go to the piers to check the activities, manufacturing did even better in May and June.

Ricky Razon, big boss at ICTSI, operator of the container terminal, said the Manila port was even more busy in May and in June. I resisted the urge to kiss him of course.

* * *

RICKY'S information tells me that our factories are importing raw materials again. It means that manufacturers are expecting brisk sales. Why do they take risks on inventory?

Consumers are doing what they do best—consuming. Which means they are spending. And based on our history, it's always the first sign of an economic recovery.

Our contacts in business think that manufacturing has been down so long, it can run out of stocks fast, the moment people regain their confidence and start spending.

Definitely, consumer confidence is going up. Another survey, done by a foreign firm for the business daily Business World, has been saying it.

But at the same time, that survey on "leaving for abroad" shows that people are losing hope here. Well, why else will they want to leave?

Maybe that's what people do when people lose hope—they spend. Which is fine with business. If indeed people spend when they feel down, it's very good for business.

* * *

WITH the terrible depression of 19 percent of Filipinos, companies like San Miguel therefore have no choice but to keep on looking for businesses to buy.

In its stockholders' meeting last week, San Miguel announced it still had P25 billion. CASH! So it is on the lookout for any food business to buy.

Another big deal is John Gokongwei Jr.'s controversial acquisition of PLDT and Fort Bonifacio for a loose change of about $600 million.

Whatever comes out of the deal, whether or not Manny Pangilinan keeps control of PLDT and Fort Bonifacio, I think the deal is good for the country.

Any huge deal, worth hundreds of millions of dollars, at this point, is good for the economy. Why are they buying, if they think this country is going to the dogs?

Either Gokongwei or San Miguel chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. are morons, or they know something those 19 percent desperados don't. If they are morons, why are they running multibillion-peso businesses and the 19 percent don't?

* * *

TODAY, San Miguel is enjoying a market share that is its highest in eight years. See, it can be done. San Miguel did it even with a big drop in consumer spending in rural areas.

Yet only five years ago, San Miguel was on the brink. Word was going on then that its debt problem was going to explode soon. Operating profits were also down. It was the favorite target for new taxes. Sales were dropping.

What happened to San Miguel was, well, it paid more attention to shareholder value. And this was only possible because Danding took hold of the company again.

Of course he would work hard to enhance shareholder value. He is one of the biggest stockholders. At least he claims to be one of the biggest stockholders. Of course next only to Haydee Yorac. Este, the PCGG.

* * *

IN less than four years under Danding, San Miguel acquired market leaders like Coca Cola Bottling (now with Sarsi and Pop Cola) and Purefoods. There is a reason.

It's something about logistics. The company is looking at a site in Batangas, where it will do all its manufacturing expansion, complete with hi-tech equipment.

There, for intance, water supply is not going to be a problem. Believe me, it will be a problem in Metro Manila in no time.

It is also beside the sea, which makes for faster, and more importantly, cheaper handling of raw materials and finished goods. Compare that with the factories along Pasig River, which use expensive shipment through barges.

All those put together make San Miguel a tough competitor. I mean, instead of complaining about globalization, it is preparing for it. Something I can't say for others in manufacturing. Or those 19 percent despairing Filipinos!

Megaworld group consolidates low-cost housing operations

By Doris C. Dumlao

FAIRMONT Holdings Inc. will flesh out plans to migrate into the mass housing business by acquiring the low-cost housing division of affiliate Empire East Land Holdings Inc. and diluting its stake in the plush Richmonde Marina project in Malate.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, FHI president Ferdinand Masi also disclosed that the company was changing its corporate name to Suntrust Home Developers Inc. to reflect the change in business thrust and raising its authorized capital to P3 billion from P2 billion.

Both FHI and Empire East are owned by Megaworld Corp. of property magnate Andrew Tan.

Masi explained in the disclosure yesterday that aside from taking over the low-cost housing division of Empire East, FHI would swap a portion of its 30-percent stake in the joint venture with Megaworld with completed residential units in the Marina residential project.

The hotel-office-residential Marina complex has 165 rooms and is ready to open by October this year.

Masi disclosed that the primary purpose of Suntrust Home Developers would be to engage in real estate development, mass community housing, townhouses and rowhouses development, residential subdivision and other massive horizontal land development. It can also acquire, construct, develop and operate hotels, lodges, resorts and other tourist-oriented projects.

On the other hand, FHI is currently operating as a holding company.

Megaworld chair and president Andrew Tan earlier said FHI would need about P1 billion in fresh funds to go into the low-cost housing business, but a stock rights offering was not likely to happen this year.

A few years ago, Megaworld acquired 1.2 billion shares of BW Resources Corp., later on renamed as FHI, as part of an asset-for-share swap involving the transfer of the former's Malate property now developed into a Marina Complex. The infusion of the bingo operations of Best World Gaming and Entertainment Corp. was originally intended to dilute Megaworld's exposure in BWRC.

COUNTRY SHARES
As of July 2, 2002

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A/B*	1.7M *	1,600,000
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	700,000	740,000
CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB A/B*	80,000	85,000/105,000 *
CAMP JOHN HAY	280,000	300,000
CANLUBANG	500,000	-
CAPITOL HILLS	-	115,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	160,000	190,000
CLUB FILIPINO	-	180,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	-	350,000/450,000*/600,000 *
EVERCREST A/B*	135,000 *	100,000
FONTANA D/C*/B**	-	85,000/150,000*/250,000 *
FOREST HILLS A/C**	210,000/250,000 *	230,000/250,000 *
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	250,000/260,000 *	270,000/280,000 *
MANILA POLO CLUB	-	2,900,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A	630,000	650,000
METROPOLITAN A/B*	-	120,000/125,000 *
MIMOSA IND/C3**	120,000/275,000 *	155,000/300,000 *
MT. MALARAYAT A/C*	-	350,000/625,000 *
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	200,000/320,000	230,000/350,000*/425,000 *
PUERTO AZUL	100,000	125,000
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	200,000	220,000
RIVIERA A/B*	-	195,000/400,000 *
ROCKWELL CLUB	380,000	450,000
ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B*/C**	-	90,000/150,000*/180,000 *
SHERWOOD HILLS A/B*/C**		115,000/250,000*/300,000 *
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB A/B*	-	1.85M
SUBIC BAY IND/CORP*	290,000 *	290,000/300,000 *
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS CC/GOLF*	425,000/800,000 *	850,000 *
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	780,000	800,000
VALLE VERDE IND.	150,000	170,000
VALLEY GOLF	240,000	-

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AS OF JULY 1, 2002

	SELLING	BUYING
1. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,600,000	
2. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,700,000	
3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	750,000	700,000
4. CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	100,000	80,000
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	300,000	250,000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	600,000	550,000
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	120,000	
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	190,000	175,000
9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS		370,000
10. CLUB FILIPINO	210,000	190,000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	200,000	
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	350,000	330,000
13. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	220,000	200,000
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	280,000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	500,000	
17. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"		250,000
18. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	280,000	260,000
19. MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)		10,500,000
20. MANILA POLO CLUB		2,800,000
21. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	650,000	620,000
22. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	760,000	700,000
23. METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	100,000	80,000
24. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	
25. MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	
26. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	220,000	* 200,000
27. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	
28. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	370,000	300,000
29. QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	230,000	210,000
30. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
31. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	210,000
32. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	1,800,000	
33. SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	250,000	
34. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L. GOLF CLUB	800,000	
35. TAGAYTAY MIDLAND		750,000
36. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	170,000	250,000
37. VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	300,000	240,000
38. WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		8,500,000

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NTT says no decision yet on sale of stake in PLDT

TOKYO—Japan's largest telecoms firm, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. (NTT), said yesterday that it had not heard that one of its subsidiaries was considering selling its shares in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

The INQUIRER quoted an NTT nominee to the PLDT board as saying that NTT was willing to sell the 15-percent stake in PLDT held by NTT's long distance carrier, NTT Communications Corp.

"The talks have not reached a decisive stage," NTT president Norio Wada told Reuters in an interview.

"I haven't heard from (NTT Communications) president (Masanobu) Suzuki that he may sell PLDT shares."

NTT Communications is considered one of the key players in a takeover battle for the Philippines' largest telecoms carrier as it holds a veto over a recent deal by Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. to sell its 24.47-percent stake in PLDT.

First Pacific, the investment arm of Indonesia's Salim family, signed an agreement with a leading Manila family, the Gokongweis, to set up a joint venture to take over First Pacific's stake in PLDT and a stake in a Philippine property developer.

Wada, 61, succeeded Junichiro Miyazu as president last week and has to steer the struggling telecoms titan with more than 200,000 group employees back on to a growth path. ***Reuters***

Freeze on new credit . . .

From page B1

the credit card sector.

Deluged with complaints, the BSP exercised its moral suasion to pressure credit card companies to bring down their rates particularly now that interest rates have dropped to new lows.

Credit card companies charge about 3.25 percent a month or about 40 percent a year.

Reyes said he believed that credit card rates were exorbitant because most credit card holders subsidize delinquent borrowers.

Buenaventura, in an earlier interview, said that credit card operators must rationalize their marketing stance and to be more discriminating with their clients so that they would have an easier time collecting their receivables instead of letting the creditworthy cardholders subsidize the delinquent ones.

Commercial banks and their subsidiaries accounted for 97 percent of the credit card business last year. As in the past, foreign lenders cornered 46 percent of the business. Among the more aggressive ones in the business are Citibank NA, Standard Chartered Bank and HSBC.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, July 1, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco De Oro Univ. Bank	18.5	18.5	18	18.25	47,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	48.5	50.5	48.5	50	799,700
China Banking Corp.	625	630	625	630	2,010
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank, Inc.	32.5	33.5	32.5	33	135,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	34.5	34.5	33	34	328,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	20	20.5	20	20.5	32,100
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1405	1410	1400	1410	5,720
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	20,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1080	1080	1080	1080	660
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23	23	22.25	22.25	1,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.71	0.72	0.71	0.71	1,040,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	510	565	510	565	1,630
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.03	0.032	0.03	0.032	2,900,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	100,000
Piltel	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	990,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	40,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	375	380	375	375	86,600
Ivantage Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	60,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.014	27,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	20.75	21	20.5	21	10,900
Manila Electric Co. B	29.5	30	29	30	616,300
Petron Corp.	1.72	1.74	1.72	1.74	1,934,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	22,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.91	120,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	4,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.48	2.48	2.4	2.42	2,333,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	46,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	200,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	5,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	60,000
Liberty Flour Mills, Inc.	16	16	16	16	10,000
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	33	33	32.5	33	10,300
Rfm Corp.	0.99	1.06	0.99	1.06	1,540,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	49	48	48.5	322,500
San Miguel Corp. B	52	54	52	53.5	303,800
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	100,000
Ayala Corp.	5.1	5.5	5.1	5.4	2,107,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.28	2.3	2.28	2.3	63,000
ATN Holdings, Inc.	2.5	2.55	2.5	2.55	79,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	4,180,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	10,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	300,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.15	210,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	20.5	21.75	20.5	21.25	67,000
Ionics Inc.	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.1	26,000
Jolliville Holdings Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	10,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.71	0.72	0.71	0.72	1,050,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	660,000
Music Corp.	0.2	0.23	0.2	0.23	340,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.72	0.77	0.7	0.7	200,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	200,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.33	1,000,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	40,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	30,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	22.5	23	22.5	23	30,200
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	635	635	635	635	20
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	800
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	6,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	425	425	425	425	60
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.8	6,385,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.205	3,500,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.28	2.34	2.28	2.34	5,476,000
Highlands Prime Leisure	1.72	1.74	1.72	1.74	275,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	400,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.9	5.6	5.9	7,086,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	900,000
MINING					
Benguet Corp. A	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	100,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.2	1,260,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	80,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	10,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	490,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.003	0.0028	0.0028	160,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	12,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	90,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	4,500,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	3,374,090	104,010,825.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	51,016,510	114,690,215.00
PRO	24,032,000	91,191,240.00
Mining	12,130,000	528,500.00
OIL	176,590,000	565,300.00
GRAND TOTALS :	267,142,600	310,986,080.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	476.87	UP 11.95
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,646.73	UP 45.75
PRO	533.60	UP 24.07
Mining	1,246.71	UP 6.31
OIL	1.30	DOWN 0.03
All Shares Index	712.57	UP 11.79
Composite	1,195.37	UP 39.02

NO. OF ADVANCES: 40; NO. OF DECLINES: 12; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 28; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 80; NO. OF TRADES: 1,557

CURRENCIES

July 1, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currencyn in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.008573	1.000000	50.5410
Japan	Yen	0.008434	0.008362	0.4226
United Kingdom	Pound	1.545940	1.532800	77.4692
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.129309	0.128210	6.4799
Switzerland	Franc	0.681146	0.675356	34.1332
Canada	Dollar	0.664672	0.659022	33.3076
Singapore	Dollar	0.570718	0.565867	28.5995
Australia	Dollar	0.568210	0.563380	28.4738
Bahrain	Dinar	2.675402	2.652661	134.0681
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.268931	0.266645	13.4765
Brunei	Dollar	0.569107	0.564270	28.5188
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000116	0.000115	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.024279	0.024073	1.2167
UAE	Dirham	0.274606	0.272272	13.7609
Korea	Won	0.000840	0.000833	0.0421
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.991500	50.1114
Argentina	Peso	0.266114	0.263852	13.3353
Brazil	Real	0.355132	0.352113	17.7961
Denmark	Kroner	0.134655	0.133510	6.7477
India	Rupee	0.020664	0.020488	1.0355
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.265449	0.263193	13.3020
Mexico	New Peso	0.101517	0.100654	5.0872
New Zealand	Dollar	0.490479	0.486310	24.5786
Norway	Kroner	0.134499	0.133356	6.7399
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016843	0.016700	0.8440
South Africa	Rand	0.097569	0.096740	4.8893
Sweden	Kroner	0.110168	0.109232	5.5207
Syria	Pound	0.019622	0.019455	0.9833
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.030233	0.029976	1.5150
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000747	0.000741	0.0375

Stocks up 3.37%

From page B1

"This is just a technical bounce unaccompanied by any fundamental reason," said A&A Securities research head Astro del Castillo.

"The market has been at an extremely oversold level. We were expecting the market to bounce any time. Value turnover, however, remained thin so it was just cautious bargain-hunting by some investors," he said.

Henry Ong, vice president for sales at KGI Securities, expected follow-through buying on Tuesday to further lift the market.

"We expect bargain-hunting to continue maybe until tomorrow. A lot of blue chips are trading at oversold levels. We also expect investors to position ahead of the release of first half corporate results later this month," Ong said.

"I think the market will continue to go up to the 1,200-point level. That's the initial target and then after that 1,250. We see the market's support at 1,180," Ong said. ***Reuters***

Central bank raises $675-M syndicated loan

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas signed yesterday an agreement with seven local and foreign banks to raise over $675 million from a five-year syndicated facility, Asia's largest sovereign loan so far this year.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said in a statement that the loan was oversubscribed and increased from the initial facility of $500 million but was slightly lower than the central bank's target, of $740 million.

Buenaventura said the central bank would use the loan proceeds to refinance an existing term loan and floating rate note facility maturing in 2004.

"The new loan facility not only reduces BSP's cost of holding international reserves but also lengthens the maturity profile of its foreign currency obligations," he said.

BNP Paribas, one of the underwriters, said in a separate statement that the facility was the "largest Asian sovereign loan in 2002, as well as the largest US dollar denominated loan in Asia, except Japan, in the year to date."

The syndicated loan was priced at a spread of 1.9 percent over six-month US Libor compared with 2.7 percent for the existing facility.

The loan would also lengthen the central bank's foreign debt maturity profile.

Apart from BNP Paribas, BPI Capital Corp., DBS Bank, ING Bank NV, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., and Standard Chartered Bank served as underwriters for the facility.

BNP Paribas said there were 22 syndicate members for the loan, comprising of various major European, Asian, Middle Eastern, North American and local financial institutions.

"The response to the facility was overwhelming. Over $300 million was raised from the general market, with 15 institutions joining the coordinating arrangers in the syndicate," the bank said.The BSP chose to borrow from a loan facility so as not to compete with the fund-raising activities of the national government, which has largely been tapping the long-term global bond market.

Malaysia, Brunei to help RP build naphtha cracker

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES, Malaysia and Brunei are set to join hands in building the Philippines' first naphtha cracker in Bataan as part of a grand strategy to export petrochemical products into China.

This was revealed yesterday by Association of Petrochemical Manufacturers of the Philippines president Henry Leung, who underscored the need for the government to help ensure the development of a petrochemical industry seen as the country's last chance to achieve an industrial status.

Leung said based on ongoing negotiations, the governments of the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei would likely hold an equal share in the proposed $700-million naphtha cracker project. Domestic players, who will be the main buyers of the cracker's output, will get a minority share in the project.

"Although we (the petrochemical players) intended to take the lead in the naphtha cracker, our current financial situation prevents us from carrying out our plan. The government is the only one capable of making the project a reality," Leung said.

The cracker will produce monomers used by petrochemical firms to manufacture resins or polymers, the basic material for plastic products, and realize the industry's goal of full integration.

Leung said while Malaysia, like Brunei, already had a strong petrochemical industry and excess feedstock, it saw the Philippines as a strong domestic market for petrochemical that it could use as a stepping stone to export to China.

Leung stressed that petrochemical players, which lost P7 billion last year and were expected to lose another P7 billion, needed government protection now to ensure that they would survive in time for the start of the naphtha cracker in three to four years.

The APMP has a pending petition before the Tariff Commission to increase duties on polymers from 15 to 30 percent up to 2010.

The APMP claims that the petrochemical industry deserves to be classified as an "infant" that needs tariff protection in its development years.

APMP executive director Mario Jose Sereno said other countries granted duties of 25 to 40 percent to nurture their petrochemical industries for 11 to 25 years.

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e-mail: cmdf_bdd@mydestiny.net
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Annual inflation flat in June, analysts say

ANNUAL inflation probably stayed flat in June from the previous month because of stable food prices, a stronger currency and a high base in the year-ago period, analysts said yesterday.

A Reuters poll of 11 economists conducted last week resulted in an average forecast of 3.595 percent for inflation in June. The data is due to be released on Friday.

If the data come in within expectations, it will be the fourth straight-month annual inflation is at or around 3.6 percent. The forecast is at the lower end of the government's estimate of a 3.6- to 3.8-percent inflation rate.

The benign inflation is expected to provide a platform for the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to keep its rates steady for the rest of the year to give impetus to an economy that analysts say is not growing as fast as expected.

"The general trend is inflation will probably start to head up in the second half of the year, but only modestly, probably staying in the 3.5- to 4-percent range," said Graham Parry, an economist at Lehman Brothers in Tokyo.

"And in that environment, there really is no pressure for the central bank to be raising rates, they could afford to keep rates low for the remainder of the year," Parry said.

Some economists believe there may have been slight price pressures related to the opening of the new school season in June. However, these pressures are not expected to make a huge impact on overall inflation.

"There is nothing that will make you shake in your boots as far as inflation in concerned," said an economist from a foreign institution.

The high base last year, when inflation was recorded at 6.7 percent in June, was also likely to keep overall inflation tame, the economists said.

Lehman's Parry said there were no pressures from either the demand or the supply side, with the strong currency dampening any spike in prices and with oil prices also moderate during the month.

Oil firms even reduced their petroleum prices by 1.9 to 2.5 percent in the last week of June following a drop in world crude prices.

Although the peso began to weaken to about 50 to 50.8 to the dollar in June from its year-high of 49.28 to the dollar in May, the effect of the depreciation would not be felt immediately, Parry said.

On the supply side, there would also be a slight decline in electricity expenses of households and industries following the reduction of the purchased power adjustment charges collected by electricity distributors.

However, the full effect of the reduction will be felt only this month.

The government has revised its average inflation target this year to 4.5 to 5.5 percent from the original 5- to 6-percent range, with consumer prices stable in the first five months of the year.

Inflation is expected to remain benign for the rest of the year, with slight increases towards the fourth quarter with economic activity likely to pick up alongside an expected global rebound.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura earlier said there were indications inflation would be benign for the rest of the year, allowing the bank to keep its monetary policy neutral. *Reuters*

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For more information, please call Flor Cruz at 634-2822 or Mary Grace Borja at 633-7902.

UNIVERSITY OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
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EasyCall in capital restructuring to finance shift to tech businesses

By Doris C. Dumlao

EASYCALL Communications Philippines Inc. is implementing a capital restructuring program to jumpstart its shift from the obsolete paging business to information technology-based services.

In a disclosure yesterday to the Philippine Stock Exchange, EasyCall spokesperson Leon Dy said EasyCall's board agreed to offset the accumulated deficit against the capital surplus or additional paid-in capital as of fiscal year ending June 30.

Dy reported that as of May 31, EasyCall's deficit stood at P329.45 million while its capital surplus was at P328.54 million.

"The equity restructuring will enable the company to clean up its cumulative deficit account, which arose from cumulative losses incurred from its various write-off of assets," Dy said.

"This will also provide the company a clean slate moving forward to its new direction and greater emphasis on the foreign call center outsourcing business," he added.

EasyCall, whose paging business became obsolete with the text-messaging boom in the Philippines, recently entered into a 50-50 joint venture with US service firm Centralized Marketing Co. to migrate to the lucrative call center business.

The company's board approved the partnership with an initial capitalization of $1 million.

EasyCall is likewise investing some P5 million to take up a 25-percent equity in iAspire.net (Philippines) Inc., an affiliate of application service provider iAspire Singapore, to enhance its Internet data center.

To support these new investments and working capital requirements, Easycall's board approved the issuance of 50 million new shares at a par value of P1 per share, which will be fully subscribed by Global E-business Solutions Inc.

Global E-business is the new strategic investor of Easycall and is an affiliate company of Transnational Diversified Group under the helm of businessman Jose Roberto Delgado, who is into shipping, stock brokerage and likewise among the stockholders of publicly listed financial/application service provider Diversified Financial Network Inc.

Standard Chartered in talks to forge partnerships with insurance firms

By Elena R. Torrijos

STANDARD Chartered Bank is exploring possible "bancassurance" tie-ups with some local insurance firms to take advantage of looser rules on the distribution of non-bank products through bank branches.

In a recent circular, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas allowed banks to offer only the insurance products of their subsidiaries to clients through their branches.

Foreign insurance companies have scored the central bank's move as "discriminatory" since they are disqualified from it, as they are not subsidiaries of banks.

They warned that the recent change in the central bank's rules would discourage future foreign investments in the Philippines.

In a news briefing on Tuesday, Standard Chartered's Philippine head, Annemarie Durbin, said the BSP had assured some banks and insurance companies that it would consider allowing bank affiliates or insurance companies that were 20-percent owned by banks to forge bancassurance arrangements

"We are talking to some local players about setting up a joint venture that is relatively small in size (to qualify as a bank affiliate)," Durbin said.

Durbin also earlier disclosed that the bank was considering acquiring a local bank to support its long-term growth strategy in the Philippines.

HSBC Corp. acquired a thrift bank last year, while Citibank NA had been scouting for a thrift bank.

Durbin said acquiring either a thrift or a commercial bank was "quite possible."

Standard Chartered is conducting a thorough analysis of what its vision should be for the next 10 years and what alternatives or measures are needed to achieve that vision, she said.

Standard Chartered, one of the largest foreign banks in the country, has six branches and is looking to increase this number depending on the locations that the central bank will approve.

Under the law, foreign banks operating with a full bank branch license in the country can only have as many as nine branches nationwide. This has limited foreign banks' ability to reach out to the consumer market. Acquiring a local bank is seen as a way for foreign banks to expand their networks.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Manulife Philippines welcomes MetLife Philippines' policyholders to the Manulife family!

Effective 30 June 2002, by virtue of the Assumption Reinsurance Agreement executed between THE MANUFACTURERS LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY (PHILS.) INC. (Manulife Philippines) and METLIFE INSURANCE COMPANY OF THE PHILIPPINES, INC. (MetLife Philippines), duly approved by the Insurance Commission, Manulife Philippines agrees to assume all in-force life insurance policies previously issued by MetLife Philippines, under their terms and conditions.

Manulife Philippines shall provide full policy services for all in-force MetLife Philippine policies through any of the following Manulife offices in Metro Manila:

- G/F, Manulife Centre, 108 Tordesillas cor. Gallardo Sts., Salcedo Village, Makati City
- 4/F, Ave Maria Bldg., 1517 Quezon Ave. (near cor. Examiner Rd.), Quezon City
- 7/F, Alabang Business Tower, 1216 Acacia Avenue, Madrigal Business Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City

To maintain full coverage under their policies, all holders of in-force MetLife policies are advised to direct exclusively all policy transactions and premium payments to Manulife Philippines through any of the above Manulife offices.

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People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Gel tech, high-tech

STAR Paper Corp., local distributor of big name brands like Parker Pen, Waterman Pen and Conqueror paper, introduces the next generation writing instruments – Leone Gel Pens.

Leone Gel Pens are novel and high-tech – they ensure smooth writing performance and come in various designs. The multipurpose ink of Leone Gel Pen allows versatility in function so everyone from high school students to Makati professionals will be able to write with ease using Leone.

The "text" generation will find Leone Gel Ball, Smooth Gel and Velvet Gel cool school accessories because the pens come in quirky colors that students can match with their notebooks, bags or outfits. These superior quality writing tools are also the most affordable in the Leone Gel Pen lineup, which easily make them the favorite of budget-conscious individuals.

Putting pen to paper is a pleasure with Leone Click Gel pen, a retractable gel ballpoint pen with rubber grip so it cradles nicely in the hand. For a more mature and professional look Leone Gel-Tech needlepoint pens and Leone Gel-Line ballpoints are equipped with a silver clip on the cap so it fits right in your breast pocket and goes with you everywhere you go.

Leone Sign Ball Gel, a retractable ballpoint pen with clear, colored barrel and rubber grip, is the right stuff to write with. Or if you want a pen that leaves a fine finish, Leone needlepoint Expos enables users to write smooth, slender strokes.

Perhaps the best thing about these gel tech – high-tech pens is that they are so affordable Leone Gel Pens are superior quality, good-looking pens at prices that will please students and hardworking professionals with tight budgets. And unlike other gel pens and sign pens, Leone Gel Pen is refillable so that when you use it up, you just spend for the ink and not have to buy a new pen every time. The price of the refills is the same as that of cheap ballpens, but Leone offers better writing quality.

Value for money, flexibility, gel technology and visual appeal are what Leone Gel Pens are all about. Check out the wide array of Leone Gel Pens and gel pen refills at National Bookstore outlets, Diplomat, Goodwill Bookstore, Annalyn's, Rustan's, Shopwise, Office One, Pandayan, Merriam and Webster, Plaza Fair Department Store, Liana's Supermarket, Gaisano, Lopues, Ororama and other leading bookstores nationwide.

"A-Z THERAPY ON SKIN PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN"
Prof. Giam Yo Chin

PEDIATRIC SOCIETY LUNCH SYMPOSIUM

The Philippine Pediatric Society, on its 39th Annual Convention, held a luncheon symposium on 'A-Z Therapy on Skin Problems with Children' with Prof Giam (fourth from right), deputy director of the National Skin Centre in Singapore. She is flanked, from left, by representatives from Stiefel Philippines Ayet Reyes, business manager and Neogin Evangelista, regional manager, Dr. Agnes G. Falcotelo, co-chair, committee on Satellite, Dr. Lucita P. Aguilar, chair, committee on socials, Dr. Donna Leelin-Sarrosa, pediatric dermatologist, Dr. Roberta C. Romero, dermatologist and head, Philippine Children's Medical Center Dermatology department, and Dr. Lorna D. Javillonar, co-chair, committee on hospitality.

adidas
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FIRST ADIDAS 'BRAND STORE' IN VISAYAS

Adidas Philippines recently awarded its first franchised Adidas 'brand store' in the Visayas to Dynamic Development Corp. Shown signing the agreement are (seated, from left) Adidas managing director and president John Alonte, Dynamic Development Corp. corporate secretary Elsie Lee and Adidas general manager for Sales Bing Paras. Standing, from left, are Adidas Philippines chief finance officer MJ Chavez and marketing director Angelica Suiza. The first Adidas 'brand store' in Visayas is located at the the Lee Super Plaza at Dumaguete City. It had its formal opening June 28 with TV personality Paolo Bediones as special guest.

Home Radio: 'no talk' nationwide

MANILA's "More Music-No Talk" Home Radio (97dot9) has put an end to "Talking Deejays" nationwide. Patterned after the success of Home Radio Manila and recently Cebu (106.7), Home Radio Iloilo (89.5), Davao (98.7), Cagayan de Oro (93.5) and General Santos (98.3) shines in its new No Talk format. "The End of Talk" will bring "More Music" to Home Radio listeners nationwide and was celebrated by pocket concerts in popular malls in Visayas and Mindanao on June 8. Hopping from island to island, radio listeners will now hear the same soothing blend Manila has experienced for over a year now.

"We are a 'no talk' radio station, but we are communicating". Home Radio's program and marketing group defines its position in the market by talking to its audience in a whole new way through a unique mix of popular hits, promos, jingles and meaty news and information. It now brings rhythm to young adults through its Adult Contemporary music format balanced with trendy outdoor events such as Movie Premiers, Mall-Bar-Campus tours with today's most sought after bands around the metro.

Among its most popular programs is "The Big Show", a tri-daily program featuring the biggest hits of the '70s, '80s and '90s. It now airs nationwide at 8 to 9 a.m., 12 to 1 p.m. and 6 to 7 p.m. "PinoydotHome" from 5 to 6 a.m. provides a cool morning with the warmth of an All-Filipino breakfast. For the rest of the day and the evening, Home Radio is now a nationwide companion dishing out popular easy listening music minus the jock talks.

Med Rep exams yield 91-percent passing rate

THE BOARD of Examiners of the Medical Representatives Accreditation Program (MRAP) announced that 91.1 percent of the 833 examinees passed the recent tests.

22 pharmaceutical companies administered the first batch of tests, while a dozen other participating companies have scheduled their examinations within the year.

The MRAP is a self-regulatory program to professionalize medical representatives (med reps) and to establish a common industry standard for their professional growth. Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, a management consultancy company, teamed up with the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) to develop a standard reference and training tool to enable medical representatives to be accredited professionally.

Rey Gerardo E. Bacarro (president and country manager, Pfizer Inc.), chair of the MRAP steering committee, expressed his deep appreciation to the Board of Examiners who worked tirelessly in ensuring the success and integrity of the examinations. The board is composed of Dr. Winnie Siao, immediate past president, Philippine Academy of Family Physicians; Dr. Antonio Ramos, vice president, Philippine Medical Association; Dr. Ma. Theresa Dioko, Department of Health; Dr. Nerissa Calimon, president, Philippine College of Pharmaceutical Medicine; Eduardo Mariano, Association of Pharmaceutical Trainors; Agnes Santos, Ancilla and Noli Galias, executive director, Marketing Executives of the Pharmaceutical Industry.

BITS Clips

Sun Life bloodletting drive

COGNIZANT of the urgent need to augment the country's blood supply, Sun Life Financial, which co-chairs the Health Committee of the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF) and in partnership with the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC), will again spearhead a bloodletting day on July 4, opening its doors to the company's employees and agents, their families and friends, and to the general public at large. This year's bloodletting day, held in celebration of the Corporate Social Responsibility Week under Proclamation #299, from July 1 to 7, will have as its main donation center the Sun Life head office in Makati at the 11th floor, The Enterprise Center Tower 2 along Ayala and Paseo de Roxas Avenue. Sun Life has donated some 300,000 cc of blood to the PNRC since the program was launched in 1992.

DLSU-D set for silver jubilee

DE LA Salle University-Dasmarinas is set for a year-round celebration of its silver anniversary. The university, originally founded in 1977 as General Emilio Aguinaldo College, is now on its 25th year. The celebration, dubbed DLSU-D@25, will kick off on July 4 with a Mass, fun run, a Caviteno food festival, showcase of Caviteno traditions, festivals and rituals, and a trade fair featuring Caviteno entrepreneurs. The different colleges have set lecture series focusing on improving the quality of life.

DMAP basic warehousing seminar

THE DISTRIBUTION Management Association of the Philippines will conduct the last leg of its 3-part Back to Basics Series on July 4 and 5. This is a two-day seminar on Basic Warehousing, which is intended for warehousing staff requiring basic training. The seminar is also useful for non-warehousing staff in related and interface functions, such as distribution, transport, shipping, inventory management, purchasing, accounting, and quality control. Speakers include experienced practitioners from the industry, and past presidents of DMAP Norman Adriano (Avon), Malou Santos (J&J), and Ed Sanchez (SSSR Consultants). Also speaking is Larry Go, president of Auto-ID. The seminar also includes a visit to an actual warehouse of a consumer goods company, and a workshop. For inquiries, call Ed Sanchez at 671-8670, fax 671-4793, or e-mail dmap@i-manila.com.ph.

SIPR GOV VISITS CONFAB

Tes B. Choa, governor of Soroptimist International of the Philippines Region (SIPR) and Margie Vitug, conference chair view the activity pictures of various SIPR clubs at the opening of the 18th SIPR Biennial Conference held recently at the Manila Hotel.

Diabetes study group chose Xenical

LOOK AHEAD (Action for Health in Diabetes), the first long-term study of the effects of weight loss in people with type 2 diabetes, has recently chosen only one pharmacological agent to be used in their research. Look Ahead, a multicenter and randomized clinical trial funded by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), had chosen Xenical (Orlistat). Xenical is the only non-systemically acting prescription lipase inhibitor for weight loss, maintenance of lost weight and reduction of weight regain. Xenical is produced by pharmaceutical giant Hoffman-La Roche.

"We're very excited that Xenical has been selected for an NIH study of weight loss in type 2 diabetics of this scope and magnitude. This underscores our ongoing findings that Xenical can help people living with type 2 diabetes lose weight and improve their sugar levels," says Dr. Henry Solomon, Roche medical director.

10 OUTSTANDING STUDENTS HONORED

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo awards the Ten Outstanding Students June 19 at the Ceremonial Hall of the Malacanang Palace, during the 141st birth anniversary of Dr. Jose Rizal. This year's program marks a new direction in the TOSP program, with training programs directed at the regions. The ten outstanding students of 2002 are Carlos Alfonso Q. Santos, Dionne Marie M. Sanchez, Arlene M. Maneja, Sherlyn L. de Guzman, Ryan C. Guinaran, John Iver Z. Solidum, Joemar L. Losaria, Emmeline Y. Aglipay, Gizelle Lou M. Cabahug, and Jenny Lind D. Elmaco.

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Asia financial crash echoes around the world

CHINESE job seekers with cards showing labor skills wait for employers on a street in China's northeastern city of Tonghua. China still faces a grim unemployment crisis that is only likely to get worse as the country opens up to global competition following its entry to the World Trade Organization. AFP

TOKYO—Five years after the financial crisis that broke out on July 2, 1997, devastating Asia's booming economies, the East has begun to learn from its mistakes, but analysts say the rest of the world has yet to pay heed.

Excessive debt, monetary imprudence, lack of transparency, creative accounting, cronyism and, to cap it all, hubris were the elements brought to light at the end of the "Asian miracle" precipitated by a forced devaluation of the Thai baht.

Observers say these continue to stalk not just the peripheries of the world's capitalist systems, but their epicenter, Wall Street.

"The crisis highlighted a variety of fundamental problems in the way Asia was financing its growth. Five years on, by and large, these problems have been dealt with," says Michael Taylor, head economist at Indosuez WI Carr Securities (Groupe Credit Agricole) in Tokyo.

Despite persisting stagnation of Japan, Asian economies were quick to find their feet again after the dust settled from the 1997-98 crisis. While some, like China and South Korea, are doing better than others, the region withstood the latest global slowdown without major drama.

The situation remains far from ideal, but financial systems have been cleaned up, the regulatory framework strengthened and corporate governance improved.

"It took this terrible crisis to expose the flaws in Asian capitalism," says Taylor.

Unfortunately, the international financial system's cracks remain papered over, leading it from one crisis to another in the emerging markets of Argentina, Brazil, Russia, Turkey and, perhaps, Brazil for a second time.

In more advanced countries, this has been matched by the collapse of the Internet bubble, the mirage of the "new economy," and the explosion of household and business debt, particularly in the United States.

As economists point out, it is largely the measures taken to overcome the Asian crisis, namely the massive injection of liquidities by central banks, which sowed the seeds of the following crisis.

The Asia crisis was certainly at the back of US Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan's mind when he held back using higher interest rates to calm the market's "irrational exuberance," which he himself denounced in 1996.

In this respect, says Taylor, it would not be incorrect to say the US Internet bubble was a derivative product of the Asian crisis.

"Unwinding all the excesses will take a series of short, unpleasant cycles—the world of long cycles we are used to is finished," he says.

Kenneth Courtis, vice president of Goldman Sachs Asia, stressed the Asian financial crisis was part of a long sequence of events originating in US policies.

"After the Mexican crisis of 1995, Robert Rubin, the treasury secretary under Bill Clinton, set up a strong dollar policy to attract foreign capital while maintaining interest rates on a low level," he said.

It was this strategy that made it possible to finance strong American growth, using capital drained from the rest of the world.

But it was also the stratospheric rise of the dollar against the Japanese yen from 1995 that devastated east Asian economies, whose currencies were tied to the greenback.

"The Asian countries were vulnerable but the crisis would not have been of the same magnitude without what occurred between the US and Japan," said Courtis.

There is no denying though that the strength of the US demand is the engine of the recovery, particularly for the exporting countries of Asia. *AFP*

Japanese firm questions court's cement ruling

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SOUTHERN Cross Cement Corp., a subsidiary of Japanese cement giant Taieyo, is disputing claims that the Court of Appeals' injunction compelled the Department of Trade and Industry to maintain the provisional duty of P20.60 per bag on cement imports until a final ruling on the case is made.

In a statement, Southern Cross said the injunction merely stopped the DTI from returning the cash bond, estimated at P86 million as of May 2002, paid by cement importers from December to June this year, but it did not allow the agency to extend the 200-day implementation period of the provisional duty.

Southern Cross insisted the provisional duty should have been lifted as of June 28 based on the order of Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II and the Bureau of Customs made in April this year.

The Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp. said it was "absurd" for Southern Cross to interpret the injunction as such when the ruling clearly directed all parties, including the trade department and the Tariff Commission, to maintain the status quo to prevent irreparable damage to the cement industry.

Philcemcor said the status quo prior to the injunction was that the provisional duty was in effect.

In a previous interview, Roxas said the injunction had now freed the trade department from doing anything it wanted under the Safeguard Measures Act—the two-year-old law that gave distressed industries relief from import surge—after getting rebuffed by the Tariff Commission in March when its finding showed no connection between the industry's losses and the surge in cement imports.

Report recommends ban on RP banana exports

CANBERRA, Australia—Australia should ban the import of Philippine bananas because they carry diseases that could devastate the local banana growing industry, quarantine officials said in a draft report published Monday.

The Philippines has applied to Canberra for permits to begin exporting bananas to Australia.

Biosecurity Australia—which assesses quarantine risks associated with plant and animal imports—said a draft risk analysis on Philippine banana imports identified a range of diseases and pests of concern.

These included moko, freckle, black Sigatoka, banana Panama disease, banana bract mosaic, banana bunchy top and hard scales and the pests mealy bugs, fruit flies, mites and weevils.

The Australian Banana Growers' Council has claimed it would cost the local industry almost one billion Australian dollars ($515 million) to treat just two of the diseases, and production would be slashed by more than 20 percent.

Although there are ways of treating many of the diseases, at least one could not be tackled, according to the draft report.

"The report recommends that imports of bananas from the Philippines should not be permitted because there are no feasible means for reducing quarantine risks associated with moko to meet Australia's appropriate level of protection," the federal Agriculture Department said in a statement.

Banana grower Sam Lizzio, who owns an 18-hectare farm in northeastern Australia, said imports would ruin the industry.

"The man on the land has enough to deal with—if he has to put up with government allowing imports he might as well chuck it in," he said. "We could never, ever survive with imports."

Farmers and potential importers have 60 days to comment on the draft report, after which the government will make a decision on whether to grant an import license. The Philippines could then appeal a ban if one is imposed. *AP, Christine A. Gaylican*

New oil players to step up security around terminals

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NEW players in the petroleum distribution business would soon be asked to implement stricter security and safety measures in their product terminals following a similar agreement forged between the Energy department, the Manila city government and the Big Three oil firms.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said he was hoping for a pact with the new players to find ways to exercise the same discipline and security practices that Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines Inc. have committed to do in their Pandacan terminals.

Last week, the Big Three signed an agreement with the Manila Mayor Lito Atienza to scale down their operations in Pandacan and build a protective zone around the depots.

Perez did not say whether the proposed agreement with new players would have the same provisions.

However, he said: "If the Big Three could do it, I don't see any reason why the new players could not (do the same)."

In a telephone interview, Flying V chair Ramon Villavicencio said the precedent of the Pandacan pact indicated that the smaller players would have to take similar steps.

"I believe the other local governments (which host) our depots may eventually take the same stance that the Manila city council took," Villavicencio told the INQUIRER.

In such case, he said the new players may have to share and manage a common terminal.

Transco to revise bidding process for ₱2.5-B project

THE NATIONAL Transmission Corp. yesterday said it was seeking approval from the National Economic and Development Authority to revise the bidding process for the P2.5-billion Leyte-Cebu interconnection project following the pull out of funds from the Asian Development Bank.

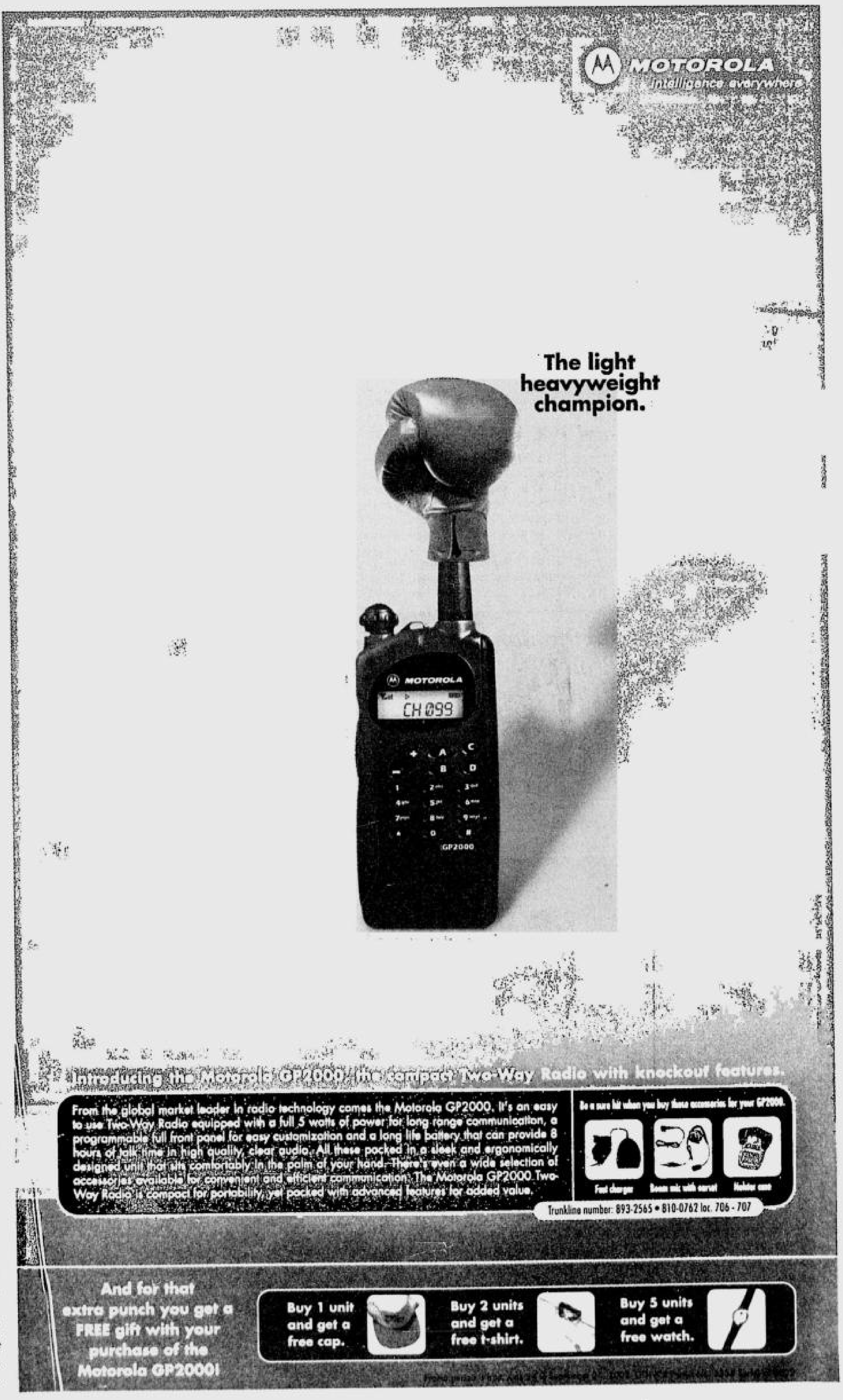
Transco vice president Dominador Geonzon said in a telephone interview that the firm would require the new winning contractor to secure financing for the project.

"The Neda Investment Coordination Committee already has this item in its agenda and we are waiting to be called in," said Geonzon, who was in the Neda headquarters in Pasig City.

The Transco official explained that the contract would be "turnkey plus financing," which means that the contractor would be responsible for the supplies and the construction of the Leyte-Cebu transmission lines on top of securing the funds.

The project, which was supposed to have been completed in 2000, aims to link the power-starved Cebu-Panay-Negros grid to the Leyte grid, which has excess electricity.

Government data anticipates a shortage of power in the Cebu-Panay-Negros grid next year if the region would fail to tap additional power sources. *Ronnel W. Domingo*



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REALESTATE

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

I.T.-THEMED REALTY PROJECTS

RP's hope for global recognition

By Charles E. Buban

IT has been quite a while since we last felt a perceptible growth in the real estate industry. Last year, was no different from the previous ones as the industry endured the brunt of another moribund market. For a change, this year's outlook is slightly encouraging. Favorable economic figures are expected for the year although these recent gains would not immediately reflect on any corporate performance reports. Nowadays the activities in one of the industry's vibrant sectors are much talked about.

At the onset of this year, there was a marked improvement in the inquiries about IT-related real estate projects. These projects refers to several planned and newly set up infrastructures supporting IT businesses such as call centers, program design, systems design, engineering support systems and hardware/software development.

The country has known this sector for quite some time now as a number of IT-related businesses are operating—and thriving—for five to six years already. However, it was only recently that its expansion and growth have been phenomenal and the industry is taking note of this.

Property services firm Jardine Colliers recently reported that some of the country's major conglomerates are now jumping into the IT bandwagon by forming subsidiaries believing this is a lucrative business. They are in fact, following the footsteps of the other large foreign and local corporations that have successfully ventured into IT-related businesses.

Booming segment

The industry is particularly interested in the sector's call center service segment that reportedly grew by more than 200 percent from 2000 to 2001. This segment refers to business establishments where calls are placed, or received, for sales, marketing, customer service, telemarketing, technical support or other specialized business activity.

A call center handles a considerable volume of calls all at the same time, screens and even forwards them to someone qualified to handle them, and even logs these calls. Call centers are specially needed by mail-order catalogue organizations, telemarketing companies, computer product help desks and large organizations that use the telephone to sell or service products and services.

A typical call center is made up of a large room, with workstations that include a computer, a telephone set (or headset) hooked into a large telecom switch and one or more supervisor stations. The number of "seats" determines the size of a call center's operation. A seat is actually a workstation where several people alternate in shifts to provide 24-hour service.

More than 30 call centers are currently in the country handling outsourcing operations. These are expected to generate some $173 million in revenues this year, a figure predicted to grow to $864 million by year 2004.

"You could just imagine its impact to the economy. Certainly the call centers are going to be the country's biggest asset over the next several years," said Keith Elliot, president and CEO of Chesterton Blumenauer Binswanger-Philippine Strategic Property Services Inc. "But to be able to realize this, the country needs to establish key components that will make it viable for multinational companies to set up here."

Beefing up the labor pool

The CBB, one of the largest and most respected international property consultancies in the world, cited the need for establishing call center academies to increase the country's labor pool. "We don't want our supply to run dry. Although we have ample supply of top graduates working in call centers right now, we are just tapping the top 10 percent. Their number won't be enough once competition from other markets, such as China, come in," Elliot said.

"And besides, we don't need top graduates working in call centers—they are needed elsewhere like in banks and finance houses where they are expected to contribute more. What we should tap is the other graduates who must at least pass the minimum requirement set by call center companies, " he added.

Elliot suggested that these training facilities—ideally working with the government and are not profit making—should cater to supplying the labor pool. "It's important to get these people and train them to various positions within a call center structure. We need these people since once other countries come in, the top 10 percent graduates, like the country is employing right now, would now be too expensive and companies will look somewhere else."

This is also one of the main reason the Contact Federation Philippines Inc. was set up last year. The federation is composed of call centers and other members from allied industries such as technology providers, financial institutions and manpower agencies. Their mission is to put the country in the global map as a contact center hub and to work closely with the government to further its goal of uplifting the thriving contact center industry.

"India poses the biggest challenge to the Philippines in the call center outsourcing business. While the Philippines remains competitively priced, it cannot match the number of call center agents in India which now stands at around 300,000 against the less than 10,000 agents available here. In terms of the quality of language skills and infrastructure, however, we have an edge," said Karen Batungbacal, CFPI president.

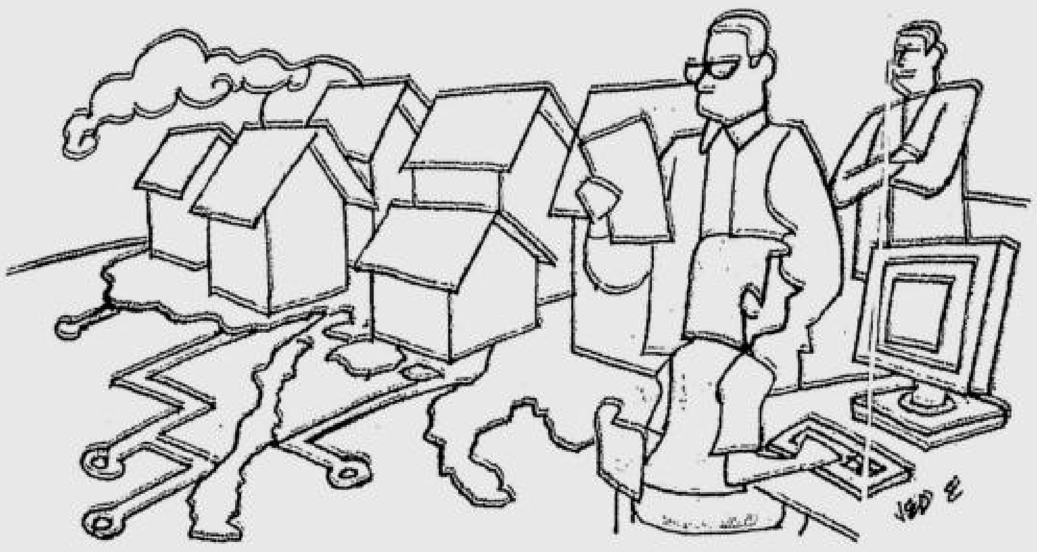

ILLUSTRATION:JED ESTRADA

To maintain this edge, the federation is lobbying for the government to refocus the country's educational system so it will be geared at giving Filipinos the competitive edge over its neighbors. "We need to retain our language edge," urged Batungbacal. "At present, only top universities churn out graduates and undergraduates with excellent communication skills. We need to start from the bottom and that entails refocusing the school curriculum by putting more emphasis on English proficiency, Math and Science."

Infrastructure devt

As global business becomes increasingly competitive and industries keep on looking for ways to maintain market share at the most cost-efficient manner, multinational companies are starting to look elsewhere for favorable locations.

"The labor cost for white-collared workers in this region is much lower than those of, say, the United States or Europe—and you get a workforce that is equally English proficient, abundant and highly educated. The country's strategic location in the Asian region is also a plus point and we have very good infrastructures here to support their operation," explained Bong Borja, CFPI chair.

In fact, the presence of quality infrastructures has convinced a number of multinational companies to choose the Philippines over other countries. The CBB Philippines for one has attracted several firms belonging to IT-telecommunications sector, which comprises 70 percent of their client base. Sixty percent of these are call centers.

"There are several things they did consider before relocating here. They wanted to be near an abundant labor supply. Transport access was also a consideration plus communication structure should already be in place and that means the building must carry a number of telecommunications providers and must have fiber optic backbone. The technical infrastructure is also crucial since they looked for a building that will provide them continuous and constant power supply," Elliot explained.

Another factor that came into view is the type of air-conditioning system used in the building. "This may seem trivial but since these companies take into account reducing costs, an air-con system can be a source of savings. In fact, we did an analysis of the different types of air-con systems used here and we found one that actually saves P11 million over a period of five years. If you are a tenant comparing several buildings that offer the same bottom line on rental and everything, you'll definitely consider this component," said Elliot.

Right now, the Philippines has positioned itself well in getting multinational companies to its fold, according to CBB Philippines. "What this country needs to do is capitalize on these advantages," suggested Elliot. "We've seen a lot of movement in the last six months. Although it's going to take some more time before we feel any tangible growth, I don't see it going down."

Social Housing One Stop Processing Centers and paper chase

By Florentino S. Dulalia Jr.
Contributor

WHY does it take long to solve our housing backlog? One of the major causes is this thing called paper chase. One has to follow a long paper trail to get approvals, permits and licenses.

Take the Community Mortgage Program as an example. To fast-track the housing program, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo did what should have been done a long time ago: she ordered the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. to trim down the number of loan applications to 18. There was a time when the entire process would take more than 100 steps involving about 50 public and private agencies. No wonder the paper chase took years and even longer if the area for housing was classified as agricultural.

Although it is tempting to look down upon it as mere paperwork, the industry and the economy in general would not move without fast and efficient documentary services. We all have to admit the fact that services serve the economy.

This is why the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations (Creba) would like to see the success of the Social Housing One Stop Processing Centers, which are designed to centralize the processing and issuance of all permits, clearances and licenses required in socialized, low-cost, economic and middle-end housing development.

SHOPCs were created by virtue of Executive Order 184 issued by former President Fidel V. Ramos for the benefit of private developers participating in socialized housing. All agencies involved in the issuance of the required documents are represented in the SHOPC regional centers. The centers are located in all the administrative regions of the country and manned by desk officers from the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Department of Interior and Local Governments and Creba representing the private sector.

The SHOPC for the National Capital Region and Regions 3 and 4 are stationed at the Creba Center with the association providing free administrative and logistical support. Creba's chapters nationwide are entrusted with the task of setting up regional SHOPCs.

It is high time that private developers and the government agencies involved in SHOPC realize that this mechanism is indeed a vital key to resolving the housing problem. If we want to keep the housing engine going, let us support the Socialized One-Stop Processing Centers. Let us keep the centers abuzz with activity in the service of our homeless countrymen and the entire industry.

(Dulalia is the president of Creba)

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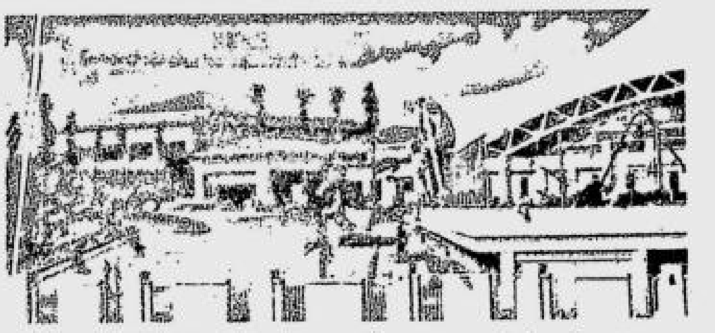

THE MAGNIFICENT entry to the soon-to-open Palms Country Club. The tent on the side shields the tennis court from harsh weather.

Palms Country Club opens next month

WHILE most country clubs are primarily dedicated to golf, Palms Country Club at Filinvest Corporate City will be the new sports hub for its privileged members when it opens first week of August.

Designed as a club for the whole family, the range of its sports and recreation facilities clearly underlines the interests and needs of various age groups. The pool area will have a 25-meter-lap pool, a water slide, a toddler's pool and The Jets water facility. For those inclined to high-energy sports, there will be two badminton courts, two indoor squash courts, four outdoor-covered and open tennis courts and an indoor basketball court (convertible to four badminton courts). There will also be four billiard tables, interactive game stations (with Internet access) and two private videoke entertainment rooms. Energetic bodies will also love the eight championship bowling lanes in the cosmic-themed bowling alley. And here's a challenge: a permanent rock climbing wall!

Golfers can still have a place to practice their swing at a 9-hole putting course. With a state-of-the-art gym and an active sports and recreation program under the able management of the club's director for sports, Michael Soller, members can be assured of year-round fitness and sports activities. When it's time to slow down, the Bliss Garden Spa will be the place to get pampered and rejuvenated.

When The Palms Country Club opens its doors in August, members will be welcomed to a new lifestyle right in the heart of Alabang.

Its other facilities include the Asiana Café, The Continental fine-dining room, Ichizen Japanese restaurant, Strikes Sports Bar, Bleachers courtside juice and snack bar and barbeque gazebos.

The Palms will also host social functions such as weddings, birthdays and baptismal parties at its 320-capacity Grand Ballroom. Conferences can be held at the club's function rooms while small business meetings can be done over lunch or dinner at the private rooms of the Ichizen or The Melange.

Robinsons Land shines, bucks realty downtrend

THE REAL estate sector was one of the hardest hit areas of our economy during the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Ironically, the crisis also brought out the best among key players in this market. One of those who stood out from the ashes of this crisis was Robinsons Land Corp.

Those were really uncertain times for the real estate sector. The market was down, and the RLC realized that the only way they could survive was to make the public interested in the quality of its projects and its firm commitment in delivering on its promises.

Part of conglomerate

"As part of the highly diversified JG Summit Group of Companies, RLC is backed up by the extensive resources, expertise and experience of this group," explains Danny Ignacio, general manager of RLC's High Rise Buildings Division. "Being part of this prestigious conglomerate, RLC has the ability, and even more, the responsibility to uphold the standards, values and traditions that JG Summit has stood for through the years. That is the reason we can confidently say to our clients that we stand on stable and solid ground and that our projects will actually go beyond the blueprint phase and get completed."

The RLC is a real estate company that builds and operates shopping malls all over the country. Aside from this, it is likewise involved in the construction and development of residential and office structures that are rising throughout the metropolis.

ARCHITECT William V. Coscolluela, left, of W.V. Coscolluela & Associates and Danilo Ignacio view the developments of Robinsons Place Residences' Tower 2 from the 7th floor. RPR's Tower 1 is fully sold out, while Tower 2 is experiencing brisk sales.

Says Ignacio: "The market has really taken well to the emergence of RLC as a major player in the high-rise condominium sector. Encouraged with the positive feedback, we then ventured into the residential subdivision development last year.

Reputable track record

"The market's remarkable response, of course, is aided by the fact that we have established a reputable track record in the industry. Our projects' portfolio is impressive and it includes high-quality residential and office condominiums and residential subdivisions, with features and amenities that are both esthetically superior and practical. Moreover, I believe we have also gained the confidence of the market because of our professionalism and our commitment in seeing the projects delivered," he relates.

"Take for example, our three office condominiums: the Robinsons Summit Center on Ayala Avenue and the Galleria Corporate Center and Robinsons- Equitable Tower in Ortigas, all situated in the country's thriving business districts," he explains. "Despite the glut of office spaces in the metropolitan area, our three buildings are enjoying above-market occupancy rates.

Marketability

"Our residential condominiums and subdivisions also enjoy this tremendous benefit of being in an extremely desirable location, which is an integral element in their marketability. Projects like the Robinsons Place Residences on Padre Faura, where the first of its two towers is already sold-out and turned over to the unit buyers, the Galleria Regency in Ortigas and Bloomfields in Quezon City, where the first three phases are sold out. All enjoy the distinct advantage of being located within self-contained communities that have malls, shopping areas, office spaces and more, within its perimeter," he relates. "Of course, the distinct features and amenities of our residential developments also add to their attraction."

One of RLC's current principal objectives is to develop its existing and newly acquired properties into affordable residential condominiums. These will primarily consist of studio and one-bedroom units with price ranges of P1.8 to P3 million and monthly amortization of less than P20,000. Currently, in the design phase are the Cubao, Pioneer/Edsa Fort Bonifacio and Ermita developments. Ignacio also stresses that despite the prevailing negative sentiments regarding residential condominiums in the metropolis, the projects of Robinsons Land have managed to buck this trend and post amazing sales reports for the past six years. "In fact, just this past fiscal year, Robinsons Land emerged as one of the top revenue-generating companies of the JG Summit Group."

This is no mean feat considering the state of the real estate sector here in our country.

And what would be the formula of the RLC success?

"Bottom line is we have earned the trust of our clients," he concludes. "And we continue to cultivate these relationships by delivering only the best."

Robinsons Land has risen to become one of the foremost real estate companies hereabouts. With its solid balance sheet, esteemed project management groups, quality yet affordable projects, the RLC has evolved into a dynamic and aggressive company that has yet to reach its highest potential.

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FRC Supermarket to open at Cuevasville

FRC SUPERMARKET—Cuevasville Realty & Development Corp.'s first foray into the supermarket business—will open for business on July 4 at Cuevasville Plaza (FRC Mall), said marketing manager Richard Masangkay.

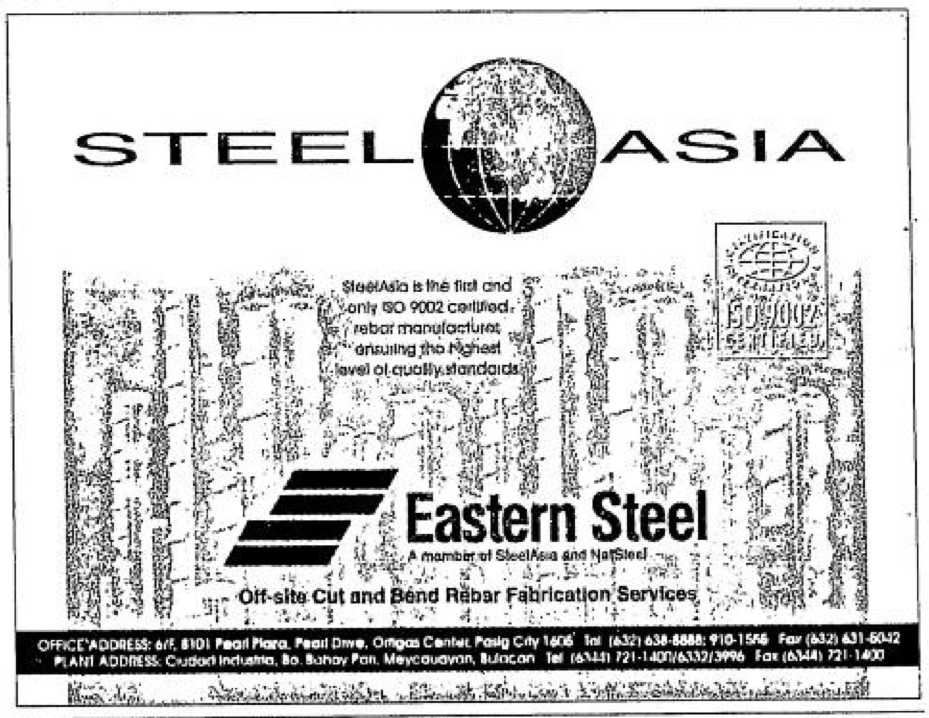
Buoyed by the success of Kristine, Cuevasville's in-house department store, the fastest growing real estate firm decided to open its own supermarket as well. The supermarket will occupy more than 500 square meters in the Bacoor mall's ground floor.

Kristine, which opened shop on May 1, is offering a wide range of imported products such as leather goods, men's and ladies' apparel, luggage and children's wear, at affordable prices. These high-quality products are all imported from Europe, the United States and other Asian countries.

Masangkay assured that just like Kristine, FRC Supermarket prices will be within everybody's reach. The supermarket will carry both local and imported brands for its canned and frozen goods while its fruits and vegetables will be chosen daily from the country's known growers.

Cuevasville Plaza (FRC Mall) is a four-story building that sits on a 32,000-sq.-m lot. It boasts of first-class amenities. Shoppers are assured of nonstop air-conditioning convenience, state-of-the-art cinemas, elevators and escalators since the mall is brownout-free.

The mall is located on the busiest section of the Zapote stretch which hosts a slew of various commercial establishments such banks, public market, convenience stores, medical center, food, drug and other shops. The area has average consumer traffic of about 1,500 per hour on off peak and roughly 2,500 per hour on peak hours. Consumer traffic is only one of the reasons for Cuevasville's initial success.



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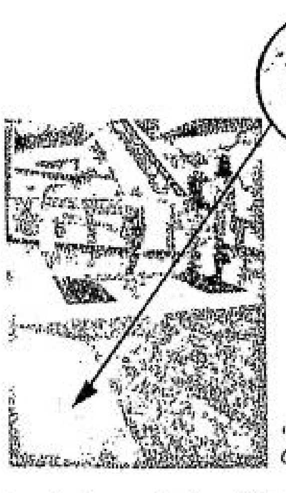
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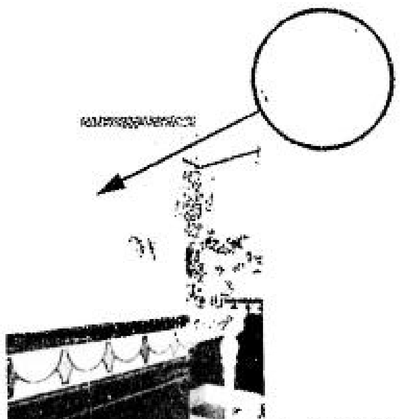
'I MARMI' - *Marble Tiles*

Dexterton Industrial Corporation (DIC), one of the country's leading distributors of branded ceramic tiles is launching their latest brand of ceramic tile in the market *IMPRONTA-ITALGRANITI*, Italy's 12th top ceramic tile manufacturer.

IMPRONTA-ITALGRANITI specializes in the manufacture of granite tiles and marble tiles. These granite tiles classified as *'I-Graniti'* is not like regular granite tiles which you find in other tile shops or hardware stores. This is because most granite tiles that are available in the market are considered to be the traditional "salt & pepper" type or those having small black or white speckled dots. *IMPRONTA-ITALGRANITI's* *'I-Graniti'* is the next generation kind of granite tiles because they look like real granite and have "granite-like" chip stones in the tile. Once laid on the wall or floor they look like exact replica of natural granite. It offers a homogenous porcelain material with superior performance, exhibiting high resistance to staining and wearing even in areas with heavy traffic. **DIC** carries 4 color ranges of *'I-Graniti'* granite tiles in 40 x 40 cm and 60 x 60 cm sizes.

IMPRONTA-ITALGRANITI is also one of the leading producers of the latest ceramic tile - the rectified ceramic marble tile. Spotting the difference between an ordinary marble tile and that of a rectified ceramic marble tile is easy. The ordinary marble tile's "veins" look like they are printed just beneath the glazing of the tile. On the other hand, the *'I-Marmi'* rectified ceramic marble tile looks like real natural marble. And because it is rectified, it possesses a slight beveled cut in all its edges and can be installed even with only 1mm grouting joint. *IMPRONTA-ITALGRANITI* uses the 'ROTOCOLOR' glazing technique in order to reproduce around 200 different nuance and veins of a marble. An ordinary marble tile will only have one veining pattern while the *'I-Marmi'* will have randomly 200 patterns therefore appearing like it was cut from real marble. Why is it better than real marble? Primarily, you get the best selection of consistent and beautiful veining. Secondly, it is non-porous which is considered as the biggest problem for marbles because they easily get stained by coffee, lipstick, colored liquids, etc. if not treated with a proper sealant. With the introduction of rectified marble tile technology by top European tile companies such as *IMPRONTA-ITALGRANITI*, rectified ceramic marble tiles are becoming very popular and are being used in prestigious hotels, condominiums and master's bathrooms because these tiles are as beautiful as real marble yet do not possess the problems that real marble exhibit. *'I-Marmi'* tiles are available in 34 x 56 cm wall tiles with matching 34 x 34 cm floor tiles in two colors.

Over the years, *IMPRONTA-ITALGRANITI* has perfected the reproduction of granite and marble tiles. **DEXTERTON INDUSTRIAL CORPORATION** invites you to visit their showroom at 157 Sgt. E. Rivera St., Quezon City to see it for yourself. Or visit their website at
You can also directly get in touch with an *IMPRONTA-ITALGRANITI* sales person through telephone numbers 362-1111 or 361-6006.

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is given that the estate of the late **ROMAN T. ACOSTA** has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs per Doc#9; Page#2; Book#IV; Series of 2002 before Notary Public Crisanto L. Garcia, Jr. of Batangas.
(PDI-June 18, 25 & July 2, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late DENNIS S. ISIDRO was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Extrajudicial Settlement with Waiver (Doc.No. 109, Page No. 19, Book No. V, Series of 2002 of Notary Public Andres C. Villaruel,Jr. of Quezon City)
(PDI-June 18, 25&July 2,2002)

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Energy Complex, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City
Tel. No. 893-1320 Local 5279
PNOC

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation invites eligible suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

1) **50 units 15 KVA Transformers**
2) **60 units 25 KVA Transformers under FGJ - 22108**

This invitation is open to all eligible suppliers of PNOC-Energy Development Corporation. Prospective bidders not presently pre-qualified with PNOC-Energy Development Corporation shall submit their pre-qualification documents not later than fourteen (14) days before the deadline for the submission of the bids. The bids of prospective (but not yeat pre-qualified) bidders who fail to submit their pre-qualification documents before the above deadline or those who fail to meet the company's pre-qualification requirements on the bid deadline shall be rejected and returned unopened.

Bid documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o Mr. Raffy S. Teylan starting June 24, 2002 and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bdding conference shall be held on July 4, 2002, 2:00 p.m. at the above address.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security to be issued by the local agent/distributor, if any, with the amount indicated in the tender document, in the form acceptable to PNOC-EDC and must be delivered to the above office on or before 2:00 p.m. of July 29, 2002. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

(Sgd.) **SERGIO ANTONIO F. APOSTOL**
Chairman/President/C.E.O.

(PDI - July 2 & 30, 2002)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Pambansang Korporasyon Sa Elektrisidad
(NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID AD NO. PD2002-18

Pre-Bid Conference : July 11, 2002 - 2:00 PM (Head Office)
July 16, 2002 - 2:00 PM (Ditucalan, Iligan City)

Opening Date : July 22, 2002 - 9:00 AM
(Head Office & Ditucalan, Iligan City)

2002-18 SERVICE CONTRACT for the Parcellary Mapping of lots affected by the Gen. Santos - Tacorong 138 kV Transmission Line Project

PB020613 - PDHS7521 SERVICE CONTRACT for the Parcellary Mapping of lots affected by the Maasim-Klamba 69kV Transmission Line Project

Interested parties are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened simultaneously at the Sampaguita Room, Ground Floor, Building 2, NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City and at Ditucalan, Iligan City.

Eligibility forms and bidding documents are simultaneously available on **July 3-10, 2002** upon payment of P50.00 per schedule which is non-refundable and presentation of TIN/supplier's number (DCE).

Issuance of eligibility forms and bidding documents, mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 AM. For inquiries, please call no. 921-2574. Last day of issuance of bidding documents, **July 10, 2002.**

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

PBAC-SERVICE CONTRACT FOR THE PARCELLARY MAPPING, RELOCATION AND SUBDIVISION SURVEY OF LOTS FOR T/L PROJECTS
NPC-OBC (Head Office), Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI – June 30 & July 2, 2002)

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LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

URGENT NOTICE

Invitation for Prequalification for LRT Line 1 Capacity Expansion Project, Phase II - Package A

This has reference to the Notice of Invitation for Prequalification announced earlier. Now the prequalification documents are available for issuance to prospective Applicants and may be obtained by filling in a standard request form and enclosing a payment of a non-refundable fee of P10,000 or US $200 (in cash/demand draft/Manager's check), at the address indicated hereunder, between **01 July 2002** to **17 July 2002**, during office hours.

Employer : Light Rail Transit Authority
Attention : Atty. Teodoro B. Cruz, Jr. Administrator
Address : Administration Building, LRTA Compound, Aurora Boulevard
Pasay City, 1300 Metro Manila, Philippines 9001
Telephone : +63 +02 8332466, 8320423, Facsimile: +63 +02 8316449

(Sgd.) **ATTY. TEODORO B. CRUZ, JR.**
Administrator

(PDI - June 30 & July 2 2002)

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In Loving Memory

On the **First Death Anniversary** of

MIGUEL G. GENERALAO

(September 15, 1963 – July 3, 2001)

Holy Masses will be offered tomorrow, Wednesday, July 3, 2002.

St. Michael's Cathedral, *Iligan City*	6:00 AM
Redemptorist Church, *Iligan City*	6:00 AM
San Lorenzo Ruiz Parish Church, *Iligan City*	6:00 AM
Monastery of Transfiguration, *Malaybalay City*	6:00 AM
San Isidro Cathedral, *Malaybalay City*	5:15 PM
Basilica Del Santo Niño, *Cebu City*	6:00 AM
Cebu Metropolitan Cathedral, *Cebu City*	6:30 AM
Sto. Rosario Church, *Cebu City*	8:45 AM
St. Isidore Parish Church, *San Fernando, Cebu*	6:00 AM
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church, *UP Village, Quezon City*	6:30 AM
Church of the Holy Sacrifice, *UP Campus, Diliman, Quezon City*	12:00 NN

ZENAIDA YCASIANO ARGUELLES

Died peacefully on June 12, 2002 at the age of 72.

Her devoted husband **Eulogio**; children **Enrico & Martha Arguelles**, **Clarissa & Ramon Moreno**, **Rosanna & Dieter Brunner** and **Emmanuel & Lauren Arguelles**; grandchildren **Nathaniel, Alannah, Raissa, Alex, Yixi, Zachary** and **Griffin**; and other relatives and friends mourn her passing away and request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

There will be a funeral Mass in celebration of her life at the UP Diliman Chapel, Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 6, 2002 at the Mount Carmel Shrine, New Manila, Quezon City after the Mass.

Irene "Nene" Rojas-Lauriaga

Born: September 18, 1921
Died: June 30, 2002

Her bereaved children Ched, Met, Flor, Nida, Lody and Oscar; sons-in-law Biyo, Bert, Pete and Rolly; grandchildren and great grandchildren, sisters & brother, and other relatives request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies at Solace 2 chapel of Arlington Funeral Homes on Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 6, 2002 at La Loma Cemetery, after the Holy Mass at 1:00 p.m. at Arlington Funeral Homes.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord" 2 Corinthians 5:8

P.D.G. Bernardino "Banding" Ramos Hernandez

Peacefully joined his Creator on June 29, 2002 at the age of 76.

His loving wife **Concepcion "Nena" Neri**; his children **Natty** and **Bob Mckernan**, **Bobet** and **Connee Hernandez**, **Chay** and **Aaron Barcelon**, **Dino** and **Inday Hernandez**, **Pixie** and **Jaime Larot**, **Lissa** and **John Cua**; his sisters **Conchita** and **Teresita**; his grandchildren, request our pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains now lie in state at the family residence at #38 Jesus Seriña Street, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City.

Interment will be on Friday, July 5, 2002 at 8:00 a.m. at Greenhills Memorial Park, Bulua, Cagayan de Oro.

Mass will be offered at Greenhills Memorial Park Chapel.

"...absent with body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 3:8

We, the management and employees of
PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
join the family of our Beloved Mentor and Adviser,

Bienvenido S. Arellano

(January 8, 1934 - June 28, 2002)

who served PNOC as ***General Manager*** **of the Energy Drilling Division**, ***Vice-President*** for **PNOC-Coal Corporation**, and ***Board of Director*** of **Filoil Management and Development Corporation**.

His remains lie in state at St. Alphonsus Chapel 4, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment will be on July 4, 2002 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

We extend our condolences to his family and loved ones and enjoin the pious readers for his eternal repose.

May our love be as strong
as the sinew that binds us together,
May our joys be as refreshing
as the waters of the river,
And may our sorrows be as leaves
carried away by the current.

PRESENTACION B. BERNAL TUTAAN

Passed on to the Great Somewhere on June 29, 2002.

Her husband **Judge Eduardo C. Tutaan**; her children **Chat** (†) & **Ogie Narvasa**, and **Redd & Minie**; her grandchildren **Carlo, Coco, Gio** and **Patricia**; her brothers **Ed, Manoling** and **Alex**; her sisters **Estela, Freny, Adele** and **Baby**; her "balae" **Andres** and **Janina Narvasa**; request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Mount Carmel Shrine Parish, Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue, New Manila, Quezon City.

Holy Mass will be celebrated on Friday, July 5, 2002 at 8:00 o'clock a.m. and Interment will follow at the Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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FIRST TIME IN 21 MONTHS

Business confidence in Japan finally rises

JAPANESE boardroom blues lifted for the first time in seven quarters as rising exports sparked fresh activity at factories, stirring the rest of the economy, the central bank's latest Tankan survey showed Monday.

But economists warned against becoming too excited by the headline figures, which were likely prompted by sheer relief that economic conditions had stopped deteriorating rather than clear signs of a sustainable recovery.

Markets gave only a modest reaction to the news, underlining the skepticism felt by investors in Japan Inc.'s returning optimism, economists added.

In the Bank of Japan's quarterly survey for June, the index of large manufacturers' confidence jumped 20 points—its highest margin yet—to minus 18 from minus 38.

Business sentiment among large non-manufacturers surged to minus 16 from minus 22 in the previous Tankan.

The indices measure the difference between firms saying economic conditions are favorable and those saying they are unfavorable. A negative figure means a majority of firms believes conditions are unfavorable.

The rise exceeded market consensus, but economists said a decision by large manufacturers to reduce planned investment in factories and equipment questioned the strength of the latest recovery—the fourth cyclical rebound since Japan's bubble economy burst in 1990.

"It is quite exuberant, thanks to export orders and the fact that things aren't getting any worse," said Barclays Capital strategist John Richards.

"Our own forecast is for an anemic recovery going forward," he said.

JP Morgan chief economist Masaaki Kanno said the headline figures were better than expected with smaller firms also gaining in confidence.

"The Tankan confirms the positive impact (of recovery) is spreading to the whole of the economy," he said.

But the data were a "mixed bag," added Kanno, as large manufacturers have revised down a planned cut in capital investment for the year to March 2003 to minus 8.9 percent from minus 8.4 percent forecast in March.

Total industries, however, plan to reduce capital spending by 5.1 percent against a 7.6-percent cut seen in the previous survey, thanks to extra investment by small firms, Kanno said.

Markets rose slightly on the positive figures with the Nikkei-225 index on the Tokyo Stock Exchange gaining 17.07 points or 0.2 percent to 10,638.91 at 10:45 am (0145 GMT). *AFP*

Fixing HK's economic problems won't be an easy task, says Tung

HONG KONG—Hong Kong leader Tung Chee-hwa said on Monday that his top task over the next five years will be to fix the territory's economic problems but added the process would be "a long and arduous" one.

"The economic and unemployment problem can't be dealt with in one or two years or be resolved by one or two measures ... ," Tung said in a speech after he was sworn in for a second term as chief executive of the territory of nearly 7 million people.

Tung owes his position to strong backing from Beijing and the start of his second also marks the fifth anniversary of this former British colony's return to Chinese rule.

Hong Kong has been battered by two recessions in four years, unemployment is at a record high and bankruptcies are mounting.

The income gap is also growing. Nearly a third of the territory's families now live below the poverty line while the number of millionaires in the territory rose slightly last year to some 45,000.

Property prices, a key driver of wealth and economic growth in the former British colony, are languishing at 50-60 percent below 1997 peaks, and the stock market has been one of the worst performers in the world this year.

"Worries are weighing on the hearts of Hong Kong people," Tung said.

He said the government would do everything necessary in coming year to create more jobs but gave few details on what his administration planned to do, saying it would work toward building closer economic ties with the mainland, especially the neighboring province of Guangdong.

Restrictions on mainland Chinese visiting Hong Kong either for leisure, family visits, study or work will be relaxed in the future, said Tung, again without giving details. *Reuters*

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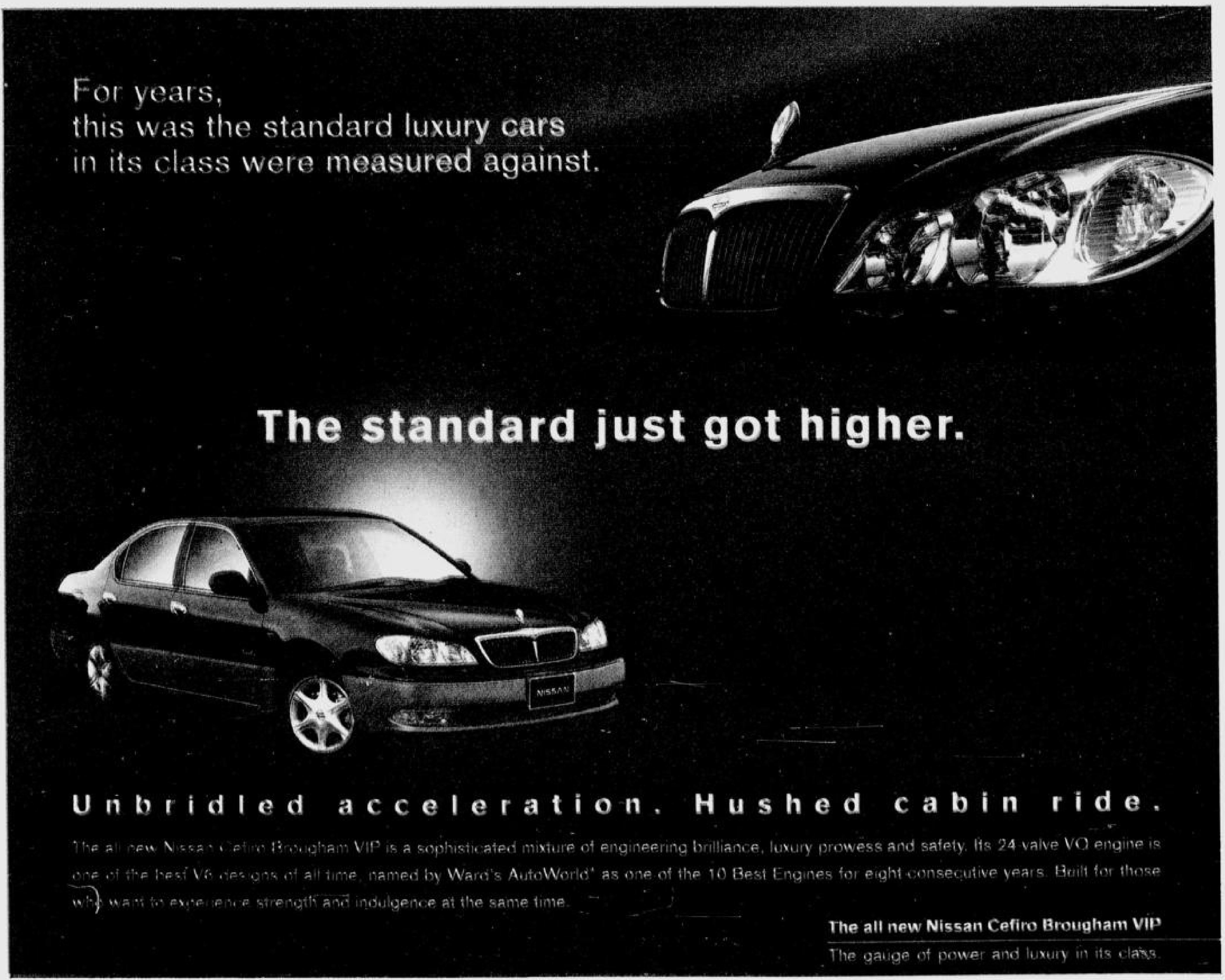

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PHILIPPINE DAILY

LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

For feedback, text us at (0918)917-5026 or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Two fitness experts had different injuries under different circumstances but had similar attitudes that contributed to hurting themselves

What I learned from my fitness injury

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

LAST week, I was reminded how I became a much wiser exerciser after injuring my shoulder when I heard Cathy Murakami, yoga and Pilates presenter at the Idea Yoga Conference in San Diego, California, talk about how a fitness-related injury made her develop a healthier perspective toward being fit.

I hurt my shoulder 20 years ago while weight lifting. Murakami tore her meniscus (cartilage in the knee) a few years ago while rock climbing with a group of friends. We had different injuries under different circumstances but we had similar attitudes that directly contributed to hurting ourselves.

In my case, it was poor technique and an inflated ego that got me into trouble. In those days, few women were lifting weights so my gym classmates were all male. Naturally, I wanted to impress them with how much I could lift. Obviously, not with the absolute amount of weight I could lift but with how much I could lift for my size.

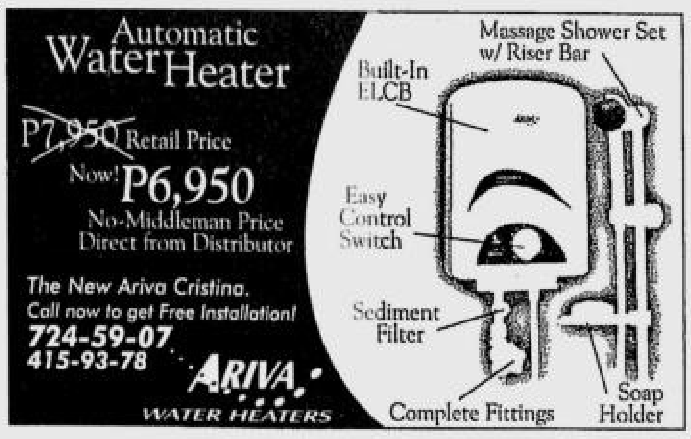
In Murakami's situation, she was having trouble with a certain rock climbing position that her friends had no problems with. Not only would her ego not allow her to give up; she also listened to her boyfriend, who kept pushing her to do it. No wonder experts say that ego is one of the leading causes of fitness injuries.

They say that you are a fool if you never learn from your mistake; that you are average if you learn your lesson; but that you are wise if you learn from the blunders of others. So here's what Murakami and I learned from our injuries. Hopefully, you will be wise, and not just average.

Humility

I learned that I am not Ms Super Fitness and that my body is just as vulnerable to getting injured as anyone else's. I have also humbly accepted that there are certain exercises I can no longer do because my shoulder just can't take it. So during the two-day yoga conference, I had to modify poses or asanas that would compromise my shoulder. Being an *ashtanga* or power yoga practitioner, Murakami said her injury definitely made her

WHAT/ p.C2



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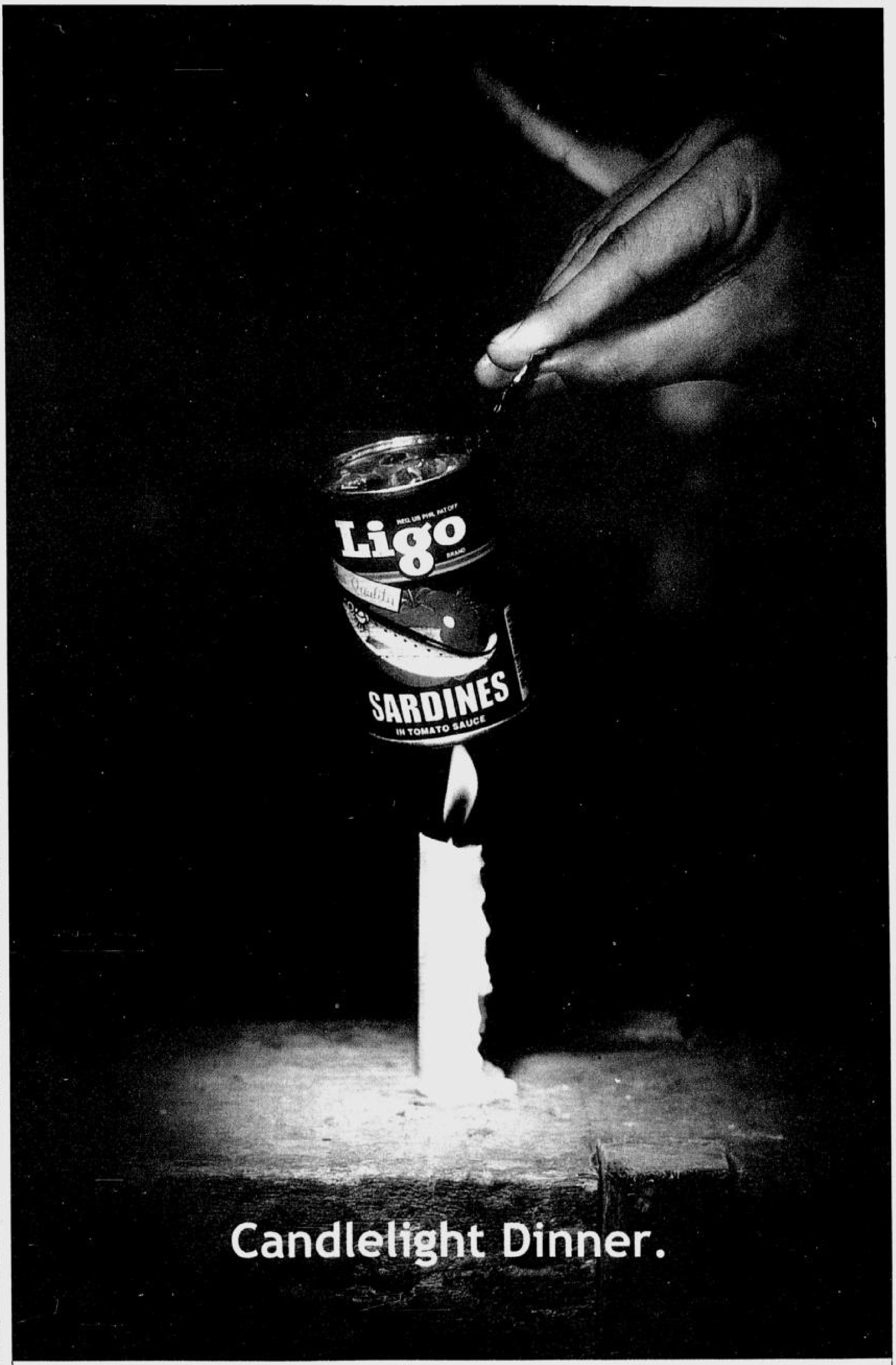

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What I learned from . . .

From page C1

eat humble pie. Ashtanga is an intense version of *hatha* yoga that can sometimes have an air of competitiveness.

Listen to your body

Our body is wonderfully made and it sends us signals when it senses pain and discomfort. I have learned to trust my body rather than myself. Now, when I feel a twinge in any joint or muscle, I back off from the offending position and modify my technique to accommodate my body's needs.

Don't compare

Sometimes the only way to emotional maturity is to get hurt. Getting injured is one sure way to teach you not to compare yourself to other people. We are all built differently, and what someone else can do easily and without risk of injury may not be for you.

Murakami said that her injury taught her, the hard way, that one of the goals of yoga is self-awareness—to find out who you really are. It made her realize that some of her goals in practicing *ashtanga* yoga were shallow ones like "I have to get my foot behind my head because everyone else can."

Don't be in denial

Denying that my shoulder was feeling sore and achy turned what should have been a simple shoulder problem into a chronic one that haunted me for years. Why was I in denial? Because I thought that if I didn't pay attention to the pain, it would go away. Plus I didn't want to face the possibility that I would have to stop exercising to rest my shoulder.

Be disciplined and patient

It takes a while to properly rehabilitate an injured joint or muscle. I learned to be disciplined about my rehab exercises (which I still do to this day) because when I don't do them, my shoulder will eventually hurt again. I also learned to be patient. I love to lift heavy weights but I know now that you can't just jump into it. I need to progressively increase the weight so I can exercise safely. And if I go on vacation or stop lifting for any reason for more than a week, I have to lower the weight. During the months that I travel a lot, this can be frustrating because it seems that I am not getting anywhere. But I have learned my lesson well.

Get professional help

Murakami took longer to heal because she tried to fix her problem herself. You would think fitness professionals would know better, but many times they don't seek out medical help because they are also in denial about how serious the problem is. Since they make their living from teaching exercise, they don't want to be told by some doctor that they might have to stop for a while. Of course, this is a counterproductive attitude because when the problem has really gotten bad, they end up stopping for a much longer time than they originally should have. Additionally, even if you are seeing a doctor but your problem is not getting better, get a second opinion. My first doctor did not treat my injury properly so I had the problem on and off for many years. I eventually came to my senses and found the right one who gave me the correct advice. But I suffered needlessly because I didn't look for another doctor right away.

Technique is very important

I cannot emphasize how important good technique is. Not only will it prevent injury but you will also get better results. A lot of people find learning the basics boring and want to do the more advanced exercises right away. Big mistake. No wonder sports medicine doctors are seeing more patients coming in with injuries from Pilates, yoga and kickboxing.

I can exercise even with a handicap

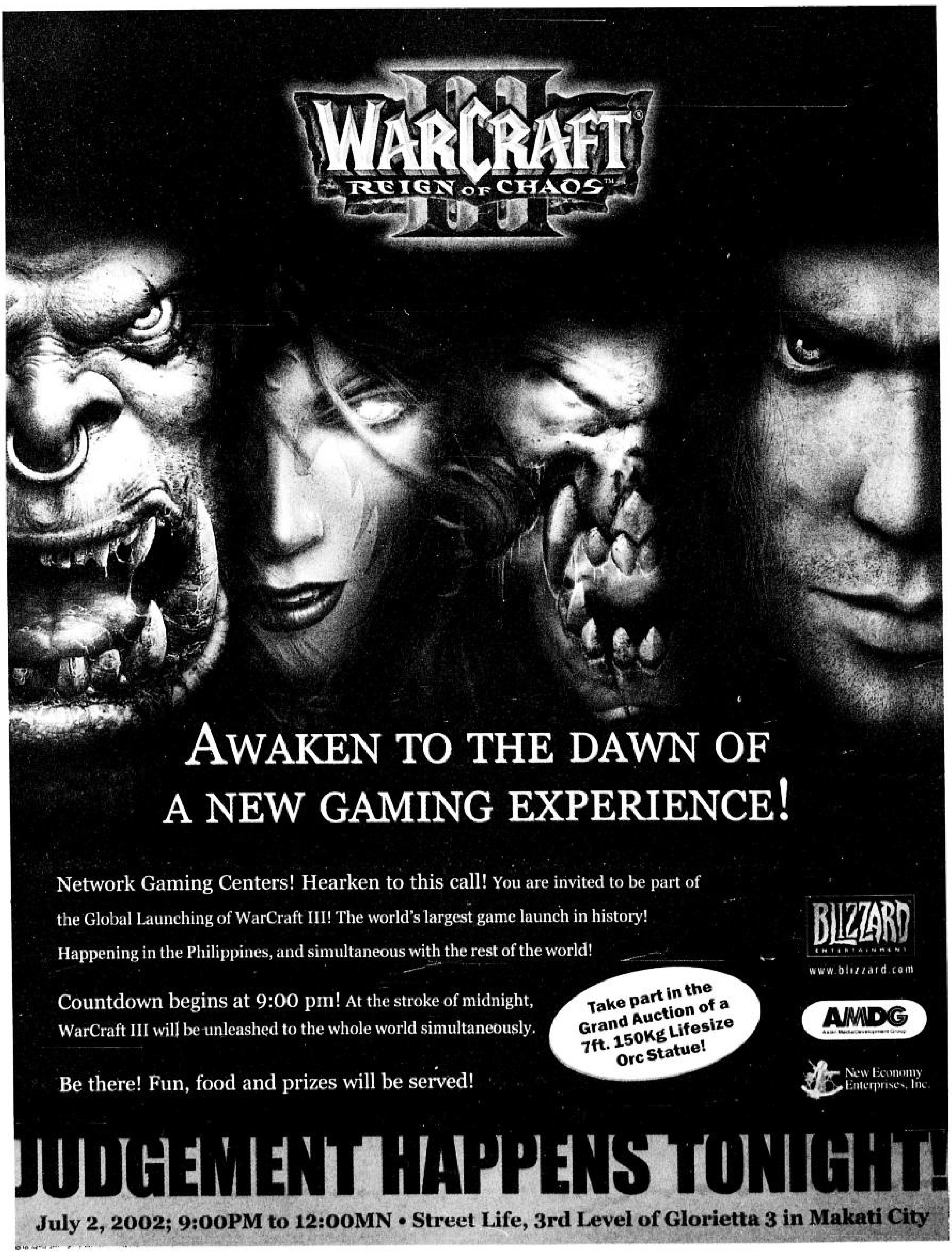
I have learned that there are many ways to exercise even if you have a handicap. This is comforting, because now I know that no matter what curveballs life may throw at me, I can still do what I love, which is exercising and teaching other people how to exercise. This means that even if I should lose both my legs or go blind in an accident, I will go on exercising and teaching, but it will just take another form.

Watch "In Fitness & In Health" on Studio 23 (Channel 42 on Destiny Cable), Mondays to Fridays, 6-6:30 a.m.

For past articles or exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.com.

WHEN YOU WISH UPON A ZOO

THE RAINS stopped long enough for 5-year-old Ina's wish to visit the Kinder Zoo at the Manila Zoo come true last Saturday afternoon. PBA basketball star Vince Hizon played celebrity zookeeper to the young leukemia patient as she rode the ostrich, petted the snake, played with the birds and beamed with genuine delight. Gift Gate, the first corporate partner of the Make-A-Wish Foundation, is set to grant the wishes of 10 more seriously ill children at 2 p.m., Wednesday, July 3, at the Gift Gate Gallery in Glorietta 2, with Martin Nievera and Kris Aquino hosting. The public is invited.



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Celebrities compete in badminton finals

SHUTTLECOCKS went ablaze as two teams competed for the JVC Celebrity Cup.

Richard Gomez, Raffy Rodriguez, Dennis Padilla, Philip Lazaro, Gen. Edgar Aglipay, Jestoni Alarcon, Chiqui Roa, Stella Ruiz, Glenda Garcia and Samantha Lopez completed the Dark Team roster, which won 6-3 over the Light Team of Ricky Davao, Rep. Teddy Locsin Jr., Bojo Molina, Mandy Ochoa, Mariz Ricketts, Alma Concepcion, Ace Espinosa and Marvin Agustin.

Capping the celebrity competition was a cocktail sponsored by JVC Philippine chairman, Faustino Salud, which honored Mamoru Otake, JVC Asia's managing director and president of the Asian Badminton Confederation. It was a night of good food, wine and songs as songbird Verni Varga rendered melodies, alongside Nami Salud. Spotted among the celebrity champions and JVC's top honchos were former badminton Olympian Weena Lim and siblings Kennie and Kennivic Asuncion, representatives of the badminton national team.

The stellar event ushered in the finals for the JVC Badminton Tournament.

Kennie Asuncion was indeed on a roll at the JVC Badminton Tournament Championships, put up by IMG. Kennie won a special award for having the most number of championships, having bagged the Mixed Doubles title with sibling Kennevic, the Ladies' Doubles crown with partner Weena Lim and the Elite Ladies' Singles title to complete a grand slam victory.

In the men's division, Ian Piencenaves was top winner in the Men's Singles, besting 89 other entries and, teaming up with Arolas Amahit, also clinching the Men's Doubles top prize.

CELEBRITIES p C3

Denial: The road to illness

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

AN OLD acquaintance and neighbor of mine came up to me one day at the supermarket looking helpless. "Please teach me to be healthy. What should I eat?"

Taking a quick glance at her, I realized that she had aged, looked pale and bloated. But more significantly, she had a sad face.

As I gave her my ABCs on healthy eating, she listed them down and thanked me profusely.

One hour later, I saw her dash into another aisle. Curious, I followed her down the corridor. Her cart was loaded with snack foods and canned goods and no single veggie or fruit! I approached her and asked "I thought you wanted to eat healthy?" Her response? "But you didn't tell me what not to eat."

Ways of denying yourself

Clearly, this woman was in denial. She had two personalities: her public self and hidden self. Unconsciously, she put up a front in order to make up for her shortcomings. Denial comes in several forms:

Intellectual—The mind can play tricks on you.

- It can make a certain reality exist—when it is only the product of a fantasy-filled imagination—to make up for something you do not have.
- A compulsive search for perfect order in one's life by not facing certain truths and not risking to make decisions about them.

Emotional—The integrity of acknowledging genuine feelings whether good or bad is compromised. You can put on a mask to face the social world but hiding behind your own fears can be just as damaging. The result? Dishonesty and delusion.

Spiritual—When you feel you are constantly in a state of grace and enlightenment while everyone else is a sinner. The result? False pride.

Physical—Ignoring symptoms you are experiencing while pretending you are well. Denying yourself the healthy regimen your body needs in order to be strong (i.e. enrolling in a gym but not using it or engaging in ceremonial exercise.) The result? Obesity or illness.

Mind your thinking

Over the years, research has proven that true health begins in the mind. Stress, considered the No. 1 cause of major fatal illnesses in the world, creates an overload on the mind and disquiet to the spirit. Because stress is an inevitable part of everyday living, we have to find ways to combat it or, at least, minimize its effects on our system.

Stress-free

Find a place of relaxation. Lock yourself in a room or a space. Disconnect all electronic devices. Light a white candle. Place it 3 ft away from you. Sit comfortably. Turn off all the lights. Focus on the flame in silence. Breathe slowly, calmly. Listen to your own breathing. Repeat to yourself, "I am one with the breath of life." Remain in this quiet state for 10 minutes.

Relaxing salt water

In a tubful of warm-hot water, mix 2 cups of rock salt. Add six drops of lavender oil mixed in 2 tbsp vegetable oil. Close your eyes. Inhale the aroma. Salt water has the power to relax tense muscles, soothe frayed nerves and absorb negative energy.

Taking stock of things

Making an inventory of your acts of denial is a good start. By reviewing your life and all its negative, excess baggage, you can nurse your delusional mind to good health.

In short, if you are overweight, admit it. If you are unhappy, acknowledge it. Because if you want positive changes to take place in your life, you must see the truth for what it is. Remember, you cannot change what you do not acknowledge.

Finding one's self

One cannot embark on any human endeavor with success unless anchored on a strong and confident self. Finding yourself cannot begin unless you know yourself. And the only way to know yourself is to deny denial.

I take inspiration from Sheidon Kopp, author of "Mirror, Mask and Shadow—The Risks and Rewards of Self Acceptance."

"Unless we feel good enough about who we are, life doesn't seem worth living." And if I might add, "So make life worth living."

Love and light!

Catch "Beauty In and Out" Mondays-Fridays, 8 a.m., Unang Hirit, GMA 7.

A book-signing for "Forever Young" will be held at National Bookstore and PowerBooks branches on July 12-13. Time schedules will be announced later.

E-mail the author at coryquirino_fy@yahoo.com

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Celebrities

From page C2

For the Junior Category, Jimson Dionisio of the Bulacan Badminton Club topped the Boys' Singles, while Valle Verde's Raquel Anne Guerrero won in the Girls' Singles. Both won a college educational plan courtesy of Pioneer Allianz. These two champions will be joined by runners-up Rodel Raymund Dawal and Rachel Anne Guerrero in a two-week badminton training overseas.

Ricky Boy Cajefe and Kelvin Ang were the champions in the Boys' Doubles, and Raquel Anne and Rachel Anne Guerrero were the victors in the Girls' Doubles. Raquel Anne won in the Mixed Doubles with partner Andrew Romualdez.

In the Veterans Category, the Men's Doubles champions were Salvador Banquiles and Renato Reyes of the PNP Badminton Club. Salvador and Jeannette Banquiles won in the Mixed Doubles.

Winners in the new category Corporate Invitational were IG Kids Food, followed by the HSBC team as first runner-up, making the ADB and Prudential Life Plans teams as second runners-up. Eight companies were invited to participate in this new category.

The JVC Open Badminton Championships 2002 was organized by IMG, and sponsored by the Philippine Star, Yonex, Pioneer Allianz, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Accel, Tokyo Tokyo, 103.5 K Lite, Spurway Enterprises, Rudy Project Eyewear and National Sports Grill.

Why do people join cults?

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

THE BRITISH book "Strange Cults" by Angus Hall begins with the following narrative:

"The year is 1897. Alfred Smythe, a man in his 50s, is a clerk in a London bank. Every weekday he sits at a massive mahogany desk, scrutinizing papers, soberly manipulating the flow of pounds, shillings and pence. At 6 o'clock sharp, he puts on his overcoat and bowler hat, picks up his umbrella, and takes a cab to his house in Maida Vale, where he has a quiet supper with his wife, and then reads a bit before retiring.

"On some evenings, however, our imaginary Mr. Smythe goes to an ordinary looking house in central London known to himself and a few other people as the Isis Urania Temple of the Golden Dawn. There he enters a world totally different from the everyday world outside. Candles and incense create an atmosphere of mystery in the chamber, which is adorned with symbols: a rose, a cross, a truncated pyramid, a red dragon. Exotic words are spoken. In this world, the Mr. Smythe of the bank is transformed. He dons a long robe and colorful insignia, and he carries the Lotus Wand, a symbol of the Magical Will. He and the other men and women in the room are Adepts—and they work magic."

This is something Mr. Smythe's colleagues in the bank would have laughed at. And so he keeps this world a guarded secret from them.

In Stanley Kubricks' last movie "Eyes Wide Shut," made just before this great director died, the main character, played by Tom Cruise, is a respected medical doctor who joins a mysterious arcane cult in the midst of modern New York. He is surprised to learn later that all members of the cult are "respectable" members of New York's upper echelon society, millionaire businessmen and other professionals who would not openly admit to being members of a cult that indulges in sex orgies.

With the violent arrest of the leader of one of the Philippines' biggest existing cults, the Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (PBMA), the public's attention has focused on the activities of cults and what makes them attractive to some people.

All cults more or less share similar features and attraction for certain individuals. Members are convinced that, by studying the teachings of their master or founder and performing the rituals, they can escape the bondage of the material world and link up to a higher or greater source of power.

There are many reasons an individual, like the banker, Mr. Smythe of London, or the New York medical doctor played by Cruise in Kubrick's film, or a schoolteacher in Surigao, joins a cult. But they can be summarized under four categories: First, to get a sense of belonging or a sense of identity. Second, to acquire discipline, which otherwise he cannot get by himself. Third, to acquire special knowledge or skill not possessed by the rest of humanity. And fourth, to gain some power.

Cults therefore satisfy certain needs of an individual which he or she cannot obtain elsewhere. The growth of cults in the Philippines and elsewhere in the world should give leaders of orthodox religion something to think about. Is it possible that people join cults because established religions are no longer able to satisfy their needs? Remember that at the very start, Christianity itself was regarded as one of the many cults in the provinces of Rome. So we should not at once condemn cults unless they violate the law.

The growth of cults in the modern world can also be attributed to the emergence of charismatic leaders who are believed by their members to possess certain supernatural powers. Ruben Ecleo Sr., the founder of the PBMA, for example, is believed to possess powers of prophecy, healing and supernatural vision. By becoming a member, an individual believes he may also someday possess such powers.

Therefore the knowledge people seek in cults is almost invariably something they cannot find in their society's schools or religion. It gives them a sense of superiority and feeling of belonging to a select group. This is reinforced by some visible symbol they wear, like a ring, a badge or a particular hairstyle or uniform.

The power that a cult member seeks may be power over his own body (for example, recovery from illness), or power to gain higher awareness, as in many Eastern cults. Or it may be power to heal others or see visions as in the case of the PBMA. In some cults, followers have been promised immortality, or the power to live forever.

What is so scary about cults is the blind obedience imposed on followers by their leaders. The world has been witness to cults leading their followers to mass suicide and mass murders with the likes of Jim Jones and Charles Manson. There is no telling when such "mentally challenged" cult leader will appear in the Philippines to do the same. Fortunately, Ruben Ecleo Jr. surrendered to the authorities after 18 of his followers died in a bloody encounter with the arresting police officers. It could have been a worse scene had Ecleo chosen to call upon his followers to fight to the death.

Write to 308 Prince Plaza 1, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City, e-mail at jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph., or visit j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my dzMM program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

Reviving Laguna's dying lakes

From page C4

"We're not only dealing with finding homes for these people," he says. "We're also dealing with people who'd be displaced once the removal of unregistered fishpens begins."

The problem has been partly solved when the city and provincial governments acquired a relocation site in San Lucas, one of the city's barangays. Several government and nongovernment organizations led by the National Housing Authority and Habitat for Humanity are studying ways of providing legitimate fisherfolk and lake dwellers decent and affordable housing.

Alas, nothing is as easy as it seems. The impending relocation has hit several snags, chief of them the absence of right of way. Thus, not a single family has been able to move to the site more than a year after its groundbreaking.

"Government says that everything will be ready before Christmas," says Mariño. "I'd be more than happy if the relocation starts sometime next year."

Meanwhile, the foundation and several like-minded groups such as the San Pablo Environmental Council and Lake Watch have been busy landscaping open spaces by the lake into pocket gardens.

Where gaudy nightspots once stood, the open-air attractions now feature stone pathways, concrete benches, swings, slides and indigenous plants. Not a few San Pablo residents have warmed up to the idea by fishing, playing and simply chatting their day away at the mini parks.

"We have a long way to go," says Mariño. "Our main concern right now is to clean the lake and eventually promote it as a venue for eco-tourism—a place to showcase San Pablo's natural heritage and culture and open up economic opportunities for all." And that includes retirees, like Mariño, and their families.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

Take Charge Doc!

Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

Rx MEDICard

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FAQs (frequently asked questions)

Does MEDICard have coverage for ambulance services?

Our standard healthcare program does not include coverage for ambulance services. It is usual for this benefit to only be incorporated into the health programs of large group and corporate accounts by way of reimbursement up to the negotiated limit. But in order to assist its members in emergency situations, MEDICard recently forged a tie-up with the Philippines' Rescue 911, **Lifeline Arrows**. Effective yesterday, July 01, members can now access Lifeline's 24 -hour hotline number, 16-911 for emergency medical and first aid advisories. It also offers discounts for ambulance services on a fee for se rvice basis for MEDICard members without ambulance coverage. For accounts with the benefit, the cost of the service may automatically be deducted from the amount of their coverage and the excess if there is, shall be billed later to the member. Lifeline also offers discounts on Inter-Facility Transfers, Air Medical Evacuation and Airlift Services, Provincial Land Conduction and Home Care Services. For further inquiries, please call 810-2775 or 840-2020 loc. 2014/15.

Meet your MEDICard Team

Dr. Rodolfo C. Rabanal, MEDICard's Medical Coordinator at Manila Central University-Filemon D. Tanchoco Medical Foundation Hospital (MCU-FDTMF) has been a part of our medical provider team since MEDICard's founding in 1987. Dr. Rabanal, who finished Medicine at MCU specializes in Internal Medicine and subspecializes in Diabetology. He is the current Chairman for the Department of Medicine for both MCU Hospital and College of Medicine. Dr. Rabanal is a Fellow to the Philippine College of Physicians and is a member to the Philippine Medical Association. He is married to Dr. Teresita Naval-Rabanal, a Pediatric Neurologist who is also a MEDICard accredited provider. Doc Rodolfo has special interest in running and has already participated in a number of marathon events. For your medical needs at MCU-FDTMF hospital, visit the coordinator's office at Room 15, from Mondays to Saturdays, 8 AM to 5 PM.

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LIFELINE ARROWS-MEDICard TIE-UP: Mr. Luis S. Montoya (MEDICard EVP & General Manager) and Mr. Michael H. Denkin (Lifeline Arrows President & CEO) seal the partnership between the HMO and the emergency services team in a recently held contract signing. Witness to the agreement signing were (standing) Mr. Voltaire R. Victoria (MEDICard Marketing & Sales Manager) and Ms. Chato P. Tomas (Lifeline Arrows Sales Manager, Business Development)

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittariu s Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e -mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

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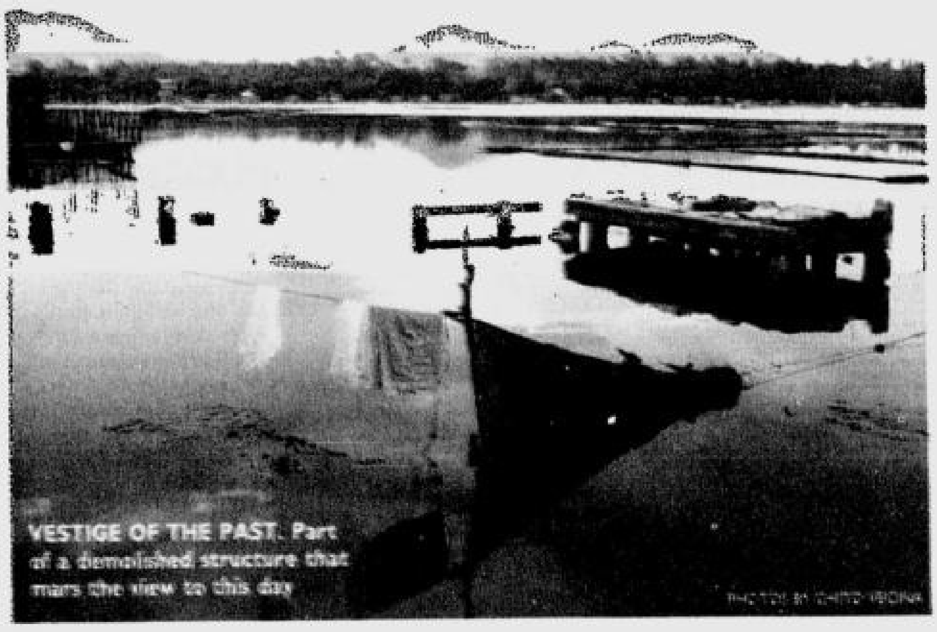
Reviving Laguna's dying lakes



VESTIGE OF THE PAST. Part of a demolished structure that mars the view to this day

PHOTOS BY CHITO [illegible]

POCKET OF BEAUTY. San Pablo residents spend their weekend fishing along one of Sampaloc Lake's mini gardens.

By Alex Y. Vergara

AFTER LIVING in the United States for almost 30 years, engineer Mandy Mariño was looking forward to spending his retirement with wife Emma and their kids at the family's lakeshore property in San Pablo, Laguna. His life of leisure, however, has had to take a backseat for the moment due to a more pressing concern: the rehabilitation of the city's seven dying lakes.

"I can still recall how I used to fish and imbibe the lush scenery the tree-lined Sampaloc Lake had to offer," says Mariño.

At 105 hectares, Sampaloc Lake is the biggest of the seven interconnected lakes that were once believed to be volcanic craters. The lakes used to attract a fair share of weekend visitors and tourists back in the 1950s. Families swam and held picnics by the lake, while joggers ran around its perimeter unmindful of people and pollution.

"There used to be nothing but fresh morning air, cool breeze and the looming Mt. Cristobal to complement the lake's natural beauty," he says.

Alas, when Mariño returned home four years ago, the pristine lake of his youth was fast disappearing, thanks largely to society's ignorance, neglect and mismanagement. In the absence of a zoning law—or its strict implementation—commercial establishments such as restaurants and beerhouses had been allowed to proliferate along the lake.

It didn't take long for squatter shanties with no proper sewage disposal systems to sprout in various points along the lake. The once inviting lake had become unsafe for bathing, much more drinking.

Further degradation

As if these eyesores weren't enough, the introduction of "fish cage" technology sometime in the 1970s further hastened the seven lakes' degradation. Due to the extensive use of commercial fishfeeds, the lakes have had very low dissolved oxygen resulting in extensive fishkill.

Fishpens are not bad in themselves, but too many of them are. The Laguna Lake Development Authority, says Mariño, had decreed that no more than 10-12 percent of a lake be devoted to fishpens. Tell that to fishpen operators of Sampaloc Lake.

"Close to 40 percent of the lake is now occupied by fishpens," says Mariño. "We don't resent such a legitimate means of livelihood, but the unregulated construction of fishpens has proven to be counterproductive."

Before the lakes completely turn into giant cesspools, Mariño, together with several friends and concerned citizens of San Pablo, established the Friends of the Seven Lakes Foundation (tel. [049] 562-7404 and [0919] 452-1523) in 1998.

The foundation, which went by such names as Save the Lakes Movement, Bantay Lawa and Sampaloc Homeowners Association, has been registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission for almost two years now.

Its primary objective, of course, is to bring back the natural state of the lakes and help maintain and protect them by extending assistance to government and other concerned sectors. Through its media campaigns, the foundation also hopes to make more Filipinos aware of the lakes' importance and the need to save them.

It has scored several victories for its advocacy. For one, through the assistance of LLDA and the city government, it successfully lobbied for the dismantling of several restaurants and beerhouses along the lake.

"Most of the owners of these establishments didn't even bother to demolish their buildings after abandoning them," says Mariño, the foundation's former president. "We've had to raise funds to level them."

Mariño and friends are thankful for such small but decisive victories. So far, no one has dared to defy the law by constructing new buildings or take the place of old ones.

Most sensitive issue

Of course, that's only the tip of the problem. The most sensitive issue by far is where to relocate several squatter families who have called Sampaloc Lake their home. Mariño, in fact, has unwittingly gained a number of enemies who feel threatened by the foundation's efforts.

Several families have stuck to their promise of moving elsewhere, but not after passing on to others the "rights" to their homes for a price. Some have assumed the role of landlord by leasing their decrepit lakeside houses to other families

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